THE HISTORY OF ALICIA MONTAGUE.

By the AUTHOR of

CLARINDA CATHCART.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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MDCCLXVII.

TO

The QUEEN.

MADAM,

PLACED at a humble diſtance from the great world, it is with the utmoſt timidity I preſume to addreſs the ſimple productions of my pen to your Majeſty. Yet, encouraged by your gracious acceptance of my firſt performance, I could not reſiſt the inclination I had of aſpiring again to the ſame honour. If there is any thing in the following hiſtory deſerving your

Majeſty's

Majeſty's approbation, the pleaſure I ſhall receive will be in proportion to the fears I now feel, leſt it ſhould be otherwiſe.

That your majeſty may long enjoy an uninterrupted ſtate of peace and tranquillity is the wiſh of,

MADAM,

YOUR MAJESTY'S

Moſt humble,

Moſt devoted,

And faithful ſubject,

The AUTHOR.

THE

HISTORY

OF

ALICIA MONTAGUE.

AS I would willingly do all in my power to ſatisfy the curioſity of my reader, I intend, before I begin the hiſtory of my fair heroine, to give ſome account of her parentage. Being no genealogiſt, I cannot pretend to go even ſo far back, as her great grandfather: ſo whether ſhe ſprung from a long race of worthy anceſtors, or whether ſhe has any noble blood in her veins, is what

I am not able to determine. In ſhort, I can trace her original no farther back than her grand-father, on the father's ſide. He was a gentleman of a good clear eſtate of two thouſand a year, in the county of *Eſſex*. As I never heard it was of his own acquiring, or that fortune, in a careleſs humour, had dropt it in his lap, I ſuppoſe it naturally deſcended to him by the death of his father.

Mr. *Thomas Montague* (which was the name of this gentleman) was left a widower in the prime of life, with two ſons, *Humphrey* and *George*. *Humphrey* was only ten years of age, when he loſt his mother, *George*, about a year younger. Mr. *Montague* was exceſſively fond of his ſon and heir; ſo fond that he was often heard ſay, that his only reaſon for not marrying a ſecond time was, he could not think of burthening *Humphrey* with a join-

a jointure, and proviſion for younger children.

The care of the young gentlemen's education he took intirely on himſelf, having no notion, he ſaid, of getting his boys whipt to ſcarecrows, by ſending them to ſchool; or to give them a tutor to cram their heads with learning, which he ſaw no other uſe for, but to plague the nation with quirks and quibbles. He took great pleaſure, when giving *Humphrey* his leſſon, in ſtroking his yellow locks, and often, in the pride of his heart, ſaid, he hoped in a few years, to looſe him to ſpell with the parſon of the pariſh.

Whether the partial praiſes beſtowed on *Humphrey* diſcouraged *George*, or that he had naturally no inclination to ſtudy, I ſhall not pretend to ſay; but certain it is, at leſſon-time, *George* was ſeldom to be found; he, for the moſt

part, being buſied in making crackers, and playing all the little miſchievous tricks he could invent. Many were the complaints given in againſt poor *George*; but as Mr. *Montague* was a great enemy to beating, and was beſides of an indolent diſpoſition, the young gentleman was ſeldom puniſhed, but by a gentle reproof. This had very little effect on him, except perhaps to put him on inventing ſome new trick, to divert himſelf, at the expence of a wig or hat of the talebearer.

No remarkable change happened till *George* was in his fifteenth year; when, all of a ſudden, he became extremely thoughtful and penſive. He now ſaw himſelf grown to the ſtature of a man, while he was deſervedly regarded as a boy. His father took very little notice of the alteration. He was too much taken

up

up with the good qualifications he imagined his favourite poſſeſſed, to take much notice of poor *George*. How long he would have continued to mope about the houſe is hard to ſay, if Mr. *Legrand* had not obſerved him. This gentleman lived very near Mr. *Montague*, and often, for want of more agreeable company, uſed to ſmoke a pipe with him, and divert himſelf with his notion of the miniſtry of men of genius and learning, who, he ſwore, were enough to turn the head of a king as wiſe as *Solomon*.

But not to detain you with the ſubject of their converſation, which is foreign to the hiſtory, I will follow Mr. *Legrand*, who one day, on his way home, obſerved *George* ſitting at the foot of a hill, with a book in his hand. This worthy man walked up to him, and, in a familiar way,

aſked him the ſubject of his meditations. With a downcaſt look, and a modeſt bluſh, our young gentleman put the book in his pocket, and riſing, aſked him, "if he had been at his father's?" Mr. *Legrand* obſerving his confuſion, and perhaps gueſſing the truth, that it was no other than a Spelling-book, enquired no farther, but anſwered, "he was juſt "come from thence;" then led him into a diſcourſe on the beauty of the evening, and the fine proſpect they had of the country. Deſiring him to take a walk, he, by degrees, drew him into converſe on different ſubjects, and was ſurpriſed to find ſo much good ſenſe in a mind ſo uncultivated.

"I have obſerved," ſaid he, "*George*, that, for ſome time, you "have been very dull: if there is "any thing lies heavy on your mind, "wherein I can be of ſervice to you,

in

" in adviſing your father to remove " the cauſe, I will do it with a " great deal of pleaſure." *George* was quite overcome with his goodneſs, and, in the fulneſs of his heart, unburthened his whole mind. He told him, " that he had now loſt " all reliſh for his childiſh amuſe- " ments, and found himſelf wholly " overlooked by thoſe who were ca- " pable of giving him any uſeful " inſtructions; that he was quite " aſhamed and unhappy at wander- " ing about like an idle vagabond, " a burthen to himſelf, and inca- " pable to appear in the world like " other gentlemen's ſons of his " rank and age." Mr. *Legrand*, after hearing him out, being delighted with the juſt ſenſe poor *George* had of his own deficiencies, and being afraid his father would never allow him a preceptor, undertook to

be his inſtructor himſelf. He encouraged him all he could, by telling him, "that it was not yet too "late to make up, in ſome meaſure, for loſt time;" and, after deſiring him to come every morning to his houſe, wiſhed him good night; leaving our youth as happy as one could be, newly inſpired with hope, intermixed with fear and diffidence.

As it is not my intention to draw this young gentleman's hiſtory into length, I hope I ſhall be excuſed for paſſing over his grateful acknowledgments to his inſtructor, or not expatiating on the pleaſure and ſelf-approbation of the worthy Mr. *Legrand* on finding *George* daily improving under his care. Were I to take the liberty of an hiſtorian, I would leap over the bounds of probability, and tell you, that, in two years, our young gentleman was thoroughly inſtructed

ſtructed in all the branches of polite literature. But as this would be diſcouraging young ſtudents even of good genius, who, I imagine, will not find it quite ſo eaſy, or perhaps make them ſport away their time, in hopes, by a little cloſe application, to make it up afterwards; I muſt here acquaint them, that, though *George* ſtudied night and day, he, at the end of two years, was only perfected in Engliſh, Writing, and Arithmetic. As Mr. *Legrand* had taken great pleaſure in teaching him, and knew nothing of the waking nights which *George* had had during that time, he now propoſed to try him with the Latin and Greek, which he had a thorough knowledge of himſelf. *George* was by this time heartily tired, and was ſenſible, that theſe languages might very well be diſpenſed with, in the way of life to which he had taken a fancy. To be brief, he acquainted Mr. *Le-*

grand with his inclination to go into the army, and begged that gentleman would uſe his intereſt with his father in getting his conſent. At the ſame time, he gave ſo many juſt reaſons for his choice, that Mr. *Legrand* could not but approve of his reſolution: he only adviſed him to defer it till another year, and in that time to improve himſelf by reading Hiſtory, and ſuch books as would give him ſome notion of the world. *George*, who already, in imagination, ſaw himſelf at the head of a regiment, had ſcarce patience to think of waiting ſo long before he threw himſelf into the arms of fortune. However, on a little reflection, with the thoughts he could not ſpend his time more agreeably, he approved of Mr. *Legrand*'s advice, and was by him, during that year, introduced into moſt of the genteel families in the county.

The

The ladies in the neighbourhood looked on him now with an eye of favour; thoſe in their teens vowing they would prefer Mr. *George Montague* without a fortune to honeſt *Humphry*, were he poſſeſſed of ten times the worth of his father's eſtate; while the ladies of a riper age were continually regretting his being a younger brother. That our young gentleman, after being received into favour by the fair, continued a whole twelvemonth without being touched by the ſoft paſſion, is what I ſhall not ſuppoſe: but, as I never heard of his having any particular attachment at that time, I ſhall imagine he only ſighed in ſecret, and ſuppreſſed it in the bud, by the grave advice of prudence, a friend he had no thought as yet of diſcarding.

How the father and *Humphrey* behaved, being little to the preſent pur-

poſe, I ſhall only inform my reader, that, with ſome little difficulty, Mr. *Montague* was prevailed on to purchaſe a lieutenancy for *George* in colonel —— regiment, and to ſettle on him a hundred a year. The regiment being then in *London*, after taking leave of his father and other friends, and receiving many uſeful inſtructions from Mr. *Legrand*, our young officer ſet out for the great metropolis. Sorry am I to ſay, that the good advices he got made not a laſting impreſſion on his mind: on the contrary, in a few weeks, they were, to all appearance, entirely obliterated from his memory; and, in the ſhort time I have mentioned, our young gentleman fell into all the expence of dreſs and high company, ſpent his money with the freedom and air of a lord, and was equally reſpected and carreſſed with the beſt of them.

Elated

Elated with his own conſequence, he thought not of *Humphrey* ſtanding betwixt him and his father's fortune. And here, gentle reader, let me inform you, if ever you arrive at the abovementioned honour, you may lay your account with loſing both your memory and your fore-ſight: at leaſt you may be as certain of it, as of loſing the delicate whiteneſs of your complexion, were you to ſettle in the *Weſt-Indies*, either of which may be poſſible, and both equally improbable.

In conſequence of the abovementioned loſs, our young officer run himſelf ſeveral thouſands in debt. A ſon of Mr. *Montague* could have no difficulty in getting credit; and, while that continued, every thing went ſmooth and eaſy. But, alas, how uncertain is the felicity of this life! one evening, while he was equipping himſelf,

himſelf, with all the elegance of taſte, for a ball, an expreſs arrived, and acquainted him with the death of his father. Although he had never experienced much of his paternal care, yet he had the ſtrongeſt natural affection. He no ſooner read that his father was no more, than his face turned as pale as aſhes, while his trembling hand could ſcarce hold the letter. No thought of what was, or what would be, the conſequence, once entered his head; and regardleſs of what, but a moment before, took up his whole attention, he threw himſelf on the couch, and gave himſelf up to the moſt unutterable ſorrow. It was ſome time before he had preſence of mind to think, that it was neceſſary to ſet out for *Mill-Park*; but not to detain my reader with too great a detail of circumſtances, let it ſuffice to ſay, that he arrived there

there time enough to ſee the cold remains of his parent laid in the family-vault. *Humphrey*, who was not poſſeſſed of a very feeling heart, felt no extraordinary grief: neither did he ſeem to be lifted up with his ſucceſſion; but behaved with all the compoſure and reſignation of a mild philoſopher.

On looking into the old gentleman's will, it appeared, that *Humphrey* was left ſole heir to the fortune, and to our young officer was bequeathed no more than five thouſand pounds, the bulk of which was already ſpent. Tenderneſs for the memory of his father prevented him from making any reflections, and a high ſpirit made him ſcorn to make application to his brother. Mr. *Legrand* was, at this time, on a viſit for ſome months, at his brother-in law's in the North; ſo he wanted that valuable

luable friend to adviſe and condole with him. Not many days after the interment of his father, he obſerved the young 'ſquire rather too complaiſant to his cook, the roſy-fingered *Deborah*. He took occaſion to mention it, and was informed, to his no ſmall ſurprize, that ſhe was intended to grace the head of his table. A few high words paſſed between them; when *George*, quite diſguſted at his brother's choice, and having no inclination to ſtay and celebrate the marriage, went poſt for *London*. He failed not to write to Mr. *Legrand* of all that had happened; confeſſing how little he had obſerved his inſtructions, for which, he owned, he was juſtly puniſhed, by now having only a trifle to depend on. In return, he received a kind and ſympathizing letter, adviſing him not to deſpond, and expreſſing his hopes

that

that he would, for the future, be more frugal in his expences; and he concluded with giving him an invitation, from his brother-in-law, to ſpend the ſummer at his houſe, which was within a few miles of *Edinburgh*, whither he underſtood the regiment *George* was in had been ordered.

Accordingly lieutenant *Montague*, after paying off all his debts, which reduced his five thouſand pounds to as many hundreds, began to prepare to march with the regiment. As nothing material happened but his brother's marriage with Mrs. *Deborah* (of which he was informed by a letter from the good natured 'ſquire) till he arrived in *Edinburgh*, I will now follow him thither. He was no ſooner in town, than he was met by Mr. *Legrand*, who received him with the affection of a parent, and immediately took him out to his brother-in-

in law's country ſeat. Mr. *Leſlie* and his wife received him with that agreeable frankneſs, which ſeldom fails of gaining the heart of a ſtranger. Their family conſiſted of themſelves, and two amiable daughters. Their only ſon had lately gone abroad, and their eldeſt daughter had been married, ſome years before, to Mr. *Grant*, a gentleman of fortune. *Harriot*, the eldeſt of the two unmarried, was at this time on the point of being married to Sir *Oliver M'Kenzie*; and the young *Alicia*, not inferior to her ſiſters in any accompliſhment, was deſtined by fate to be the wife of a ſubaltern officer. To be brief, Mr. *Montague* in a few weeks was perfectly captivated with the beauty, and engaging modeſty, of the amiable *Alicia*. She was no leſs taken with his fine addreſs, which ſet all his other qualifications in the faireſt light, and

failed

failed not to raiſe him friends, where-ever he went. In ſhort, contrary to the rules which prudence preſcribed, and to the advice of friends, who did all in their power to prevent it, our young couple were privately married. The old folks were with difficulty reconciled, but at laſt were perfectly ſo, by the kind interpoſition of Mr. *Legrand*, who purchaſed a company for *George* in Col.—— regiment, then lying in the county of *Eſſex*. Mr. *Leſlie*'s fortune being very inconſiderable, he could not afford to give his daughters more than five hundred pounds apiece; and not even that before his death, which happened about a year after he had ſeen his daughters ſettled. Mrs. *Leſlie* died in two months after her her huſband. Captain *Montague* and his wife were then in *England*. As it is not my intention to be very particular

cular in their hiſtory, I will paſs over many ſcenes, that, however intereſting they might be to perſons concerned, would afford very little amuſement to the reader.

The death of ſo worthy a man as Mr. *Legrand*, which happened ſoon after his return to *Eſſex*, calls for a tear of remembrance, or rather, I may ſay, of ſympathy for his ſurviving friends; but as time has now blunted the edge of their grief, and many of them have followed him to the land of forgetfulneſs, let us not waſte our tears, but keep them for thoſe who ſtand in immediate need of our tenderneſs. Mrs. *Montague*, from the time ſhe left *Scotland*, was divided from all her relations: yet was that loſs, in a great meaſure, made up by the affection of one of the beſt of huſbands, who looked upon her, as ſhe really deſerved, as one

one of the firſt and moſt accompliſhed of women.

The captain being very much eſteemed by the brave general ——, as he was indeed by all his ſuperior as well as inferior officers, was, immediately, on the commencement of the war, preſented with a majority. The regiment being ordered to *M*——, the major would have perſuaded Mrs. *Montague* to ſpend the time of his abſence in *Scotland* with her ſiſters, Mrs. *Grant* and Lady *M'Kenzie*; but ſhe, though of a ſoft and eaſy diſpoſition, could not be prevailed on in this point, but choſe to undergo the fatigue of travelling, with all the other hardſhips of war, rather than be ſeparated from her huſband. When they left *England* they had only one ſon, whom they ſent down to *Scotland*, to the care of his uncle and aunt, Sir *Oliver* and Lady *M'Kenzie*.

Whether

Whether the fear and anxiety Mrs. *Montague* was in at the thoughts of what might happen, or the fatigue had been too much for her delicate conſtitution, I cannot ſay; but, by the time they were arrived at *M*——, her health was very much impaired. The major ſaw this, though ſhe endeavoured all ſhe could to conceal it. Never was a braver officer than the major, nor one who had more ambition to ſignalize himſelf in the ſervice of his country; yet, had it been conſiſtent with the character of a man of ſpirit, he would gladly have given up all hopes of the honour he might acquire, to have had it in his power to relieve his wife from her fears, which, though ſhe did not expreſs them, he imagined were the real cauſe of her illneſs.

Often would he endeavour to divert her thoughts from the probabi-

lity of there being an engagement. At other times, he would try to fortify her mind in caſe of a battle, by repreſenting the dangers of the field as no more than what we are all liable to every moment of our lives. "The arrows of death," ſaid he, "are perpetually flying around us; "and were we not guarded by an "inviſible power, who can protect "us in the midſt of war as in the "days of peace, we might be con-"tinually alarmed." With a ſmile of inexpreſſible ſweetneſs, ſhe owned the juſtneſs of his obſervations; and expreſſed her hopes, that, if occaſion required, ſhe ſhould be enabled to ſhew her firm dependence on providence by her reſolution, while the chriſtal drop, which ſhe endeavoured to conceal, ſeemed to contradict the ſentiments ſhe expreſſed. The phyſicians gave the major very ſmall hopes

hopes of her recovery, and ſeemed to think it barely poſſible ſhe might live to be delivered of the child, of which ſhe was at that time pregnant. As her time drew near, the major's uneaſineſs and anxiety increaſed; nor did he leave her a moment, that could be ſpared from the duty of his ſtation.

One day a party of the enemy, having been ſeen at ſome diſtance, the major went to reconnoitre them. On his return he was met by the doctor of the regiment, who wiſhed him joy, and informed him of Mrs. *Montague*'s being ſafely delivered of a daughter. He likewiſe added, ſhe was ſo much better than he had expected, that he now had great hopes of her recovery. The major, ſcarce able to diſtinguiſh whether his joys or fears were predominant, made all the haſte he could home. When he entered

entered the houſe, he was told, that Mrs. *Montague* was quite impatient to ſee him, and that ſhe was beginning to have fears on account of his abſence, which it was dangerous to indulge in her condition. He haſtened to her apartment, where their meeting was too tender to be deſcribed. The nurſe brought the ſleeping infant, and gave her into the arms of her father. He kiſſed the lovely innocent, and wiſhed ſhe might inherit all the virtues of her amiable mother. By the major's deſire the child was named *Alicia*. Every day gave the doctor greater expectation of Mrs. *Montague*'s perfect recovery.

In about a month after this, the enemy ſeemed to be in ſuch a ſituation, that it was thought neceſſary, to prepare every thing for a ſpeedy engagement. The major, dreading nothing ſo much as the ac-

quainting his wife with this piece of news, reſolved to conceal it from her, if poſſible; but from the confuſion the town was in, and the frequent meſſages ſent to the major, ſhe began to ſuſpect the truth, when one morning he told her, "he was "obliged to leave her a few days, be- "ing ordered by the general to go and "take a view of the country." This immediately confirmed her ſuſpicions, while the roſe, which, but faintly had returned to her cheek, intirely diſappeared, and ſhe ſunk motionleſs in his arms. The major, quite overcome with tenderneſs, was ſcarce able to call for aſſiſtance. A ſervant being near, proper reſtoratives were immediately got, which ſoon revived her; and looking up in his face, with the ſweetneſs of an angel, "Can "you, my dear *George*," ſaid ſhe, "forgive my weakneſs in giving

"you

" you pain, when I ought rather to
" encourage you, in ſhowing by my
" preſent fortitude, that, let the event
" be ever ſo dreadful, I, with reſig-
" nation to the will of providence,
" will look forward to that happy
" time, when we ſhall meet to part
" no more; and, in the mean time,
" will do my duty in being a mo-
" ther to our dear children? But,
" my deareſt *George*," continued ſhe, while her whole frame trembled, " think not, becauſe of my preſent
" weakneſs, that I want reſolution.
" Go; heaven can, and perhaps will,
" preſerve you, and bring you back
" ſafe, to diſpel all my fears: if other-
" wiſe"—While ſhe ſpoke, her guardian angel had beſpoke the god of ſlumber to lull her to reſt. She cloſed her eyes, and fell into a ſoft and gentle ſleep, ſuch as the good and virtuous only can experience.

The major, more afraid of the danger ſhe was in, than of his own, could not leave her without being ſenſibly affected. He gave orders to her attendants not to leave their miſtreſs a moment; and, as he had ſeen it was impoſſible to deceive her, gave them ſuch inſtructions, as he thought would be moſt conducive to ſupport her ſpirits. He then retired to his cloſet, where he continued ſome time; and returning to the room, took the young *Alicia* in his arms, and bleſſed her: and having thus done he went away to join the regiment, with that firmneſs, which was neceſſary on ſo important an occaſion. Mrs. *Montague*, after ſleeping above two hours, awaked more compoſed and eaſy than could be expected. She enquired not for the major, thinking herſelf certain of the truth; but gave herſelf up to ſuch reflections as were calcu-

calculated to prepare her for the worſt. Strict orders had been given not to alarm her with flying reports. Three days elapſed without her hearing any thing of what was paſſing betwixt the two armies. On the morning of the fourth, ſhe felt herſelf more than uſually oppreſſed, more than ſhe thought conſiſtent with reaſon and religion. "Alas," ſaid ſhe to herſelf, while her heart throbbed with pain, "what a poor frail "creature am I! my foreboding "imagination repreſenting to me a "load of grief, which I doubt my "being able to bear. O gracious "heaven! look down in pity, and "puniſh me not as I deſerve!" At this moment, ſhe held the ſmiling *Alicia* in her arms, while the nurſe and maid, who were both in the chamber, were pleaſed to ſee their miſtreſs ſeemingly compoſed.

As that day, which was big with the fate of *Cato*, and of *Rome*, ſo was the dawn of this morning, overcaſt with clouds. On a ſudden the thunder began to rattle, and the flaſhes of lightning were ſo terrible, that a mind, not already prepoſſeſſed with gloomy ideas, might have been ſtruck with terror. Mrs. *Montague* had ſcarce delivered the infant into the arms of her nurſe, and had ſunk on the couch, when a loud call of "victory!" made her ſtart up. With her head reclining on her hand, her fine face expreſſive of the agitation of her mind, ſhe liſtened, when a fellow from under her window, bawled out, "Our troops have gained a "complete victory; but the brave "major *Montague* lies amongſt "the ſlain." Imagine to yourſelf, O gentle reader, the condition of this tender, delicate, this affectionate

tionate wife; behold her fine eyes looking up to heaven, her whole frame immoveable as a ſtatue. No friendly tear could now come to her relief: the thunder rattled, the lightning flaſhed unobſerved: equally incapable of hope or fear, ſhe remained in a ſtate of inſenſibility; while the nurſe and maid wringing their hands in pity, and terrified at the ſtorm, gazed at their miſtreſs, then on each other, not knowing which way to turn.

At length the ſtorm beginning to abate, a humane clergyman and his wife ventured from their home, with the kind intention of adminiſtering comfort to the afflicted. They had heard the tidings of the major's being ſlain, which was ſoon confirmed by numbers, with regret. They entered this melancholy abode with truly ſympathizing hearts. They expected to find the mourning widow

drowned in ſorrow; but how were the good couple ſtruck, when they beheld this ſilent ſpectacle of woe! They looked at her for ſome minutes with their hearts overflowing with compaſſion. The good clergyman then put up a fervent prayer for her recovery; after which, his wife did all in her power to rouze her from her ſtate of inſenſibility; and accompliſhed her purpoſe ſo far, that the heavy ſighs ſhe gave, ſhewed her ſenſibly pained at the heart. She was then put to bed, and every thing done for her, that was neceſſary for one in her ſituation.

As the enemy were totally defeated, our troops, with very little loſs, returned in triumph; but the death of major *Montague* (who was univerſally beloved, and who had ſignalized himſelf by his bravery in the field of battle) ſeemed to throw a damp

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on every one's joy. All the honour that could poſſibly be conferred on his remains, was beſtowed upon them. The general, in regard to his memory, as alſo on account of the eſteem he had for Mrs. *Montague*, ordered a guard on her houſe, with every other mark of reſpect that it was poſſible to ſhew. No perſon was admitted into her apartment but the phyſicians, and the clergyman and his wife (who ſeldom left her) and her own attendants. The people of diſtinction, in and about the town, ſhewed their regard to the memory of the major, by their kind enquiries after Mrs. *Montague*, the careſſes they beſtowed on the young *Alicia*, and the preſents with which they loaded her nurſe.

Three weeks paſſed without the phyſicians having any hopes of Mrs. *Montague*'s recovery: but heaven,

who, on every occaſion, can ſhew us, how little cauſe the beſt have to depend on their own ſtrength, does alſo ſhew, that, however the light of reaſon may be obſcured by the frailty of our natures, yet providence, to the good and virtuous, often lights it up again, to ſhine with double luſtre. A friendly ſhower of tears firſt came to her relief. She then bewailed her own weakneſs, and addreſſed her Maker in words the moſt pathetic, to forgive, ſtrengthen, and enable her to do her duty. The good clergyman encouraged her, and failed not to uſe every argument, to chear her, that religion and good ſenſe could dictate. She liſtened with attention, and felt the effect, like a charm, diſpel the clouds, which had overſhadowed her mind. On her enquiring for *Alicia*, the ſweet innocent was brought. She took her in her arms,

arms, let fall a freſh ſhower of tears, bleſt the ſmiling babe; then caſting up her eyes to heaven, prayed to be enabled to perform her duty in the double capacity providence had been pleaſed to allot her. Every day encreaſed the ſerenity of her mind, and by the force of reaſon and religion, ſhe found, to her comfort, the truth of that maxim, That it is good for us that we are afflicted.

In a few weeks after the firſt ſigns of her returning reaſon, ſhe was able to receive the friendly viſits of thoſe who had ſo kindly enquired for her during her diſtreſs. She then became anxious to return to her native country; but that could not be effected ſo ſoon as ſhe wiſhed. However, in leſs than ſix months, the general received a call to return to *England*. He immediately waited on Mrs. *Montague*, and in-

formed her; adding, "he was ex-"tremely glad, he had it in his "power to eſcort her himſelf to her "own country." As ſoon as every thing was prepared, ſhe bid a grateful adieu to thoſe friends, who had ſympathized with her in her melancholy ſituation, and ſailed with her little family in the ſame ſhip with the general. They arrived ſafe in *England*, after a very agreeable voyage. The general, ſo ſoon as he waited on the king, mentioned the bravery of major *Montague*. His majeſty had been informed before of his behaviour, regretted much his having loſt ſo complete an officer, and gave orders that his widow, during her life, ſhould receive a double penſion.

Sir *Oliver M'Kenzie* and his lady had come to *London*, on purpoſe to receive Mrs. *Montague*, and to take the moſt prudent method to

acquaint

acquaint her with the loſs of her ſon, who died of the ſmall-pox. They had likewiſe to inform her of the loſs of her little fortune, which had been left in the hands of a gentleman of undoubted credit, with the five hundred pounds of the major; every farthing of which was loſt by his unexpectedly becoming bankrupt. Mrs. *Montague* ſhed many tears for the loſs of her ſon; but ſhewed no immoderate ſorrow, nor refuſed the advice of her friends, to do every thing to amuſe her, conſiſtent with the decency of her character. Lady *M'Kenzie* would have had her go and live in the North country amongſt her relations, and it was her own inclination to do ſo: but as her conſtitution had been always delicate, and was now become more ſo than ever, the phyſicians, who were con-

ſulted,

ſulted, gave it as their opinion, that her going to ſo cold a country, might be attended with danger. She therefore gave over thoughts of going thither, and took a ſmall but genteel houſe in the town of ——, where ſhe had lived before with her huſband, and had a pretty numerous acquaintance.

'Squire *Humphrey*, her brother-in-law, lived within a few miles of the town. He waited on her as ſoon as ſhe arrived in ——, and ſeemed more concerned for the loſs of his brother, than could have been expected from his uſual inſenſibility. Sir *Oliver* and lady *M'Kenzie* left *England*, as ſoon as they ſaw Mrs. *Montague* ſettled, and that growing fondneſs for her daughter, who was now beginning to liſp out words, ſeemed to promiſe amuſement enough to a fond parent. Mrs. *Montague* ſoon recovered her natural chearfulneſs, and was

was much eſteemed by all her acquaintance. She early inſtilled into the young *Alicia* principles of humanity, and, by little ſtories calculated for her tender years, uſed, at once, to entertain and inſtruct her. The pleaſure and attention with which ſhe liſtened, and her natural remarks, gave the fond mother a ſenſible delight. How pleaſant the ſenſation that ariſes from doing our duty! how preferable to the tranſient pleaſures of vanity! which ſeldom comes up to our expectation, never fails leaving diſagreeable reflections behind, and often, by the force of habit, makes us incapable of reliſhing thoſe pleaſures, which flow from a wiſe and well-regulated conduct.

As nothing material happened during the firſt fifteen years of *Alicia*'s age, I will paſs them over with only acquainting my reader, that, in

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that time, ſhe improved in every accompliſhment that can adorn the ſex. Her beauty, which was her leaſt qualification, was ſuch, as made her other qualities appear the more conſpicuous; and the gracefulneſs of her air and motion, with the affability of her behaviour, gained her the admiration and eſteem of all who had the pleaſure of her acquaintance. Her uncle, *Humphrey*, whoſe taſte was not ſo refined as to be a judge of her charms, yet was proud of the accounts he daily heard of her uncommon merit.

He had found by experience, that a woman, from the humble ſtation from which he had raiſed Mrs. *Deborah*, was not always the moſt tame: on the contrary, ſhe had been commander in chief, till death, which levels all diſtinctions, laid her in the duſt, and left honeſt *Humphrey* to enjoy the honour,

nour, which undoubtedly he had the beſt title to, and which he prudently reſolved never to give up again to the beſt woman in Chriſtendom.

Ever ſince his wife's death, he had lived very comfortably, kept a good deal of his eſtate in his own hand, made an excellent farmer, and took care, for the moſt part, to be king of his company. He had only one ſon, who, being ſeveral degrees more clowniſh than his father, was generally known by the name of *Hopeful*; a name given him by ſome wag, who had often heard the 'ſquire mention him as the hope of his family. Young Mr. *Thomas*, *alias* Mr. *Hopeful*, being arrived at the age of nineteen, was beginning to have a ſneaking kindneſs for the laſſes. The 'ſquire, dreading the thoughts of his ſon's fixing his fancy on a Mrs. *Deborah*, reſolved with himſelf

himſelf to look out for a proper wife for him.

It was not long before it entered into his head, that his niece, *Alicia*, who was ſo much praiſed for her good-nature and affability, would ſuit his taſte exactly. He therefore, without any delay, acquainted his ſon, who, with a grin of approbation, ſaid, "He was very willing: "but mayhap," ſaid he, "feather, "ſhe mayn't fancy me, thoff ſhe be "not a bit proud neither; yet I's "always affeard to ſpeak to her. "When I was laſt at my aunt's, "there were two fine tinſal ſparks "there, with their hair bedizened "with powder, that was talking "ſome gibberiſh to her. They ſtared "at me, and ſneered, as thoff I had "been as unchriſtian-like as they "were. Mayhap my couſin may "have ſet her fancy on one of them; which

" which if ſhe has, als one to *Tho-*
" *mas.* There is *Chris Belton* and
" *Cecil Toby*, *Margery Cock*, a ſmirk-
" ing laſs, and *Nell Derby* (as tight
" damſels as ſhe, though they be
" not bedecked with trinkum trank-
" ums like her) will ſnap at young
" *Hopeful.*"

The 'ſquire in return, ſaid, " That
" though *Alicia* complied with the
" cuſtom of dreſſing, like other ma-
" dams of her age, yet as ſhe was
" very mild in her diſpoſition, ſhe
" would, when married, dreſs to
" pleaſe her huſband; and as for
" theſe fine ſparks, which he had
" ſeen, it was more than pro-
" bable they carried their eſtate on
" their back, and were not worth
" one acre of land. He was cer-
" tain, that his niece had more ſenſe
" and prudence, than to prefer one of
" them to his ſon, who was heir to

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" an eſtate of two thouſand pounds " a year, as well paid money as any " in the county." *Hopeful*, rubbing his hands, and laughing heartily, ſaid, " Odſheart, veather, I's long " to begin; ſhall I go and viſit " couſin to-morrow?" The 'ſquire ſaid, " He would firſt acquaint his " ſiſter-in-law, that ſhe might pre- " pare *Alicia* to receive him in qua- " lity of a lover." Accordingly, next day the old gentleman ſet out to viſit Mrs. *Montague*. But as I have collected a good many letters, which have let me more particularly into the hiſtory of *Alicia*, than I other ways could have been; I imagine it will be more agreeable to my readers, that I tranſcribe them in proper order, than only to give them what is more particularly intereſting. Before I begin to tranſcribe, let me firſt inform them, that miſs *Montague* had a ge-

a general acquaintance with the people of faſhion in the town of ——, and was ſo much eſteemed, that envy ſeemed to ſleep: not one would venture to ſhew their being poſſeſſed of ſo baneful a paſſion, by daring to caſt a ſhade on either her beauty or merit.

Amongſt the young ladies of her acquaintance, there were two, whom, by a ſimilitude of age and ſentiment, ſhe was more particularly intimate with than the reſt. The firſt of theſe was the only daughter of lord *Robert Encrom*, and it was thought very likely for many years, as his lordſhip continued a widower, that ſhe would be heireſs to the eſtate and honours of her father and grandfather. But his lordſhip, in the fiftieth year of his age, thought proper to marry a young lady about five and twenty, who brought him two ſons, of whom he

was

was doatingly fond, as he was likewiſe of their mother, though a lady of not a very amiable diſpoſition. Miſs *Sophy Oſmond*, the other companion of *Alicia*, was the daughter of admiral *Oſmond*. Her mother died when ſhe was in her infant years, and the admiral being for the moſt part abroad, miſs *Oſmond* was brought up by her aunt, a prudent old lady in the town of ——; but on the admiral's having acquired a large fortune, and being in the decline of life, he reſolved to ſettle at home. He therefore took a very handſome houſe in *Pall-Mall*, and eaſily prevailed with his ſiſter, Mrs *Edwin*, to leave the town of ——, and with his daughter *Sophy* to come to *London*, and take care of him in his old age. Mrs. *Edwin* lived but a few months after ſhe came to *London*; ſo that miſs *Oſmond*, at the age of ſe-

venteen, was entirely her own miſtreſs. To this young lady, I ſhall preſent my readers with a letter from miſs *Montague*.

Miſs MONTAGUE *to Miſs* OSMOND.

My dear *Sophy*,

IT was with inexpreſſible pleaſure I received your laſt favour. Your happineſs, which you ſo feelingly deſcribe, adds not a little to mine; and your abſence, which appeared ſo irkſome at firſt, has by your goodneſs, in writing regularly, given miſs *Encrom* and me a fund of entertainment, which we were before quite ſtrangers to. In return, you have a right to expect an account of all our little excurſions, which, though not ſo brilliant as yours, will, with the warmth

warmth with which *Caroline* and I cannot help deſcribing them, let you ſee that we are not leſs pleaſed and happy than you are. I believe I wrote you in my laſt, that my couſin, *Bob M'Kenzie*, was coming to ſpend a few weeks with us in his way to *Scotland*. He arrived here *Tueſday* ſen'night, and, I aſſure you, is very much improved ſince you laſt ſaw him.

On *Thurſday* we had a ball, given by the gentlemen of the *Shire*. Miſs *Encrom* danced with Col. *Smibert*, and my ladyſhip with your old admirer, 'ſquire *Thornton*. I engaged my couſin, *Bob*, to *Nancy Welwood*; but I will leave the particulars of the night's entertainment, for a place in Miſs *Encrom*'s letter. In the uſual way, we had a viſit from our partners next day; and the evening being extremely fine, moſt of us met in the *Park* at ſeven. You know

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the way on theſe occaſions, of dividing into ſmall parties. Miſs *Encrom*, miſs *Welwood*, the two miſs *Lloyds*, miſs *Thornton*, with our reſpective partners, made up ours.

Before we parted, my couſin, *Bob*, made a propoſal, which was immediately agreed to, that next day we ſhould have a party of pleaſure on the water. Accordingly, the company met at our houſe in the morning, where we breakfaſted. Mamma was entreated to go with us, which ſhe would have done with Mrs. *Welwood*, though you know her poor ſtate of health; but my uncle, *Humphrey*, had ſent her a meſſage, that he was coming to wait on her, that day, on particular buſineſs; ſo ſhe could not poſſibly go, which prevented Mrs. *Welwood* going likewiſe. Sir *Harry Granville* was miſs *Lloyd's* partner at the ball; captain *Pierce*

danced with her ſiſter *Polly*; and, I need ſcarce tell you, *Jack Shooter* with miſs *Thornton*. Col. *Smibert* procured lord *Dey*'s pleaſure-barge; and, I give you my word, we had a moſt delightful ſail. We had no other muſic than the melody of our voices. Betwixt twelve and one we landed at the moſt romantic place you ever ſaw; but though I was quite ſtruck with its beauty, I am ſenſible it would leſſen the idea your imagination can paint, were I to attempt to deſcribe it.

On walking round a huge rock, the ſound of a *French* horn directed our ſteps to the entrance of a cave, where an old hermit accoſted us with a kind ſalutation; and, addreſſing himſelf to Sir *Harry Granville*, offered to conduct us where the ſervants (which he ſuppoſed were ours) had placed a band of muſick. We accord-

accordingly followed Sir *Harry* and the venerable old man, who brought us, in a few minutes, within ſight of the muſicians. They no ſooner ſaw us, than the concert began. 'Tis impoſſible, my dear *Sophy*, for me to expreſs, or even you to conceive, any thing ſo harmonious. From this ſpot we had a view of the fineſt landſcape in the world. All nature ſeemed in peaceful tranquility, and could not fail exciting in our hearts gratitude and praiſe to the great Giver of all. We had a rural entertainment of the fruits the ſeaſon produced, with ſillabubs, cream, &c. The hermit was invited to partake of our repaſt, which he modeſtly declined; but at laſt was prevailed on. Every one was ſolicitous to draw him into converſation.

He ſeemed to obſerve with pleaſure our anxiety, and, with a ſmile,

which appeared graceful on his venerable cheek, obſerved, that the taſte we ſhewed in admiring the works of nature, could not proceed from unthankful hearts; and that the moſt refined pleaſure a rational being was capable to enjoy, was in obſerving the various beauties of creation and providence. "But I imagine, ſir," ſaid miſs *Encrom*, "you have found, by "experience, that it is not poſſible "to have an uniform taſte for theſe "pleaſures, without ſecluding your-"ſelf from the world." "You "are quite miſtaken, madam," returned he. "A juſt ſenſe of the "various bleſſings of providence "will inſpire us with a generous "love for our fellow-creatures; "and, ſo far from making us ſhun "their ſociety, will prompt us to "do all in our power to promote "their happineſs. You muſt have

"had

" had a very particular reaſon then," ſaid *Caroline*, " which could make you " baniſh yourſelf from the world. " Why madam," ſaid he, " the more " we conſider the works of providence, " the more we muſt regret our imper- " fect ſtate. By the degeneracy of " our nature, we are apt to fall into " temptation; and when we are not " employed in the neceſſary buſineſs " of life, in devotion, or in acts of " beneficence, it behoves us to keep " up the animal ſpirits by proper re- " creation, and by varying the in- " nocent amuſements of life, ſo as " not to render them taſteleſs and " inſipid. On this account, ma- " dam, I transformed myſelf into a " hermit; and, by the regard this " company have ſhewn me in the " ſuppoſed character of one flying " from the pleaſures of ſociety, I " am almoſt afraid to ſhew myſelf

" in an oppoſite light. However, " ladies, truſting to your goodneſs, " —by a quick tranſition you ſhall " ſee"——Good heavens! ſaid I, lord *Dey*! " At your ſervice, ma- " dam," returned his lordſhip, throwing off his venerable habit—imagine our ſurprize! Miſs *Encrom* declared not even lord *Dey* could make up for the loſs of our hermit.

We wandered about the rocks all the afternoon, and paſſed the time in agreeable converſation. His lordſhip meeting us as a hermit had been ſchemed the evening before by him and Sir *Harry Granville*; the reſt of the gentlemen knew nothing of it, more than the ladies. Lord *Dey*'s real character agrees exactly with the ſentiments he expreſſed, his greateſt pleaſure being in contributing to the happineſs of others. We went aboard of our barge at ſeven; the muſick,

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in another, which, though not ſo melodious as amongſt the tocks, was delightful and ſweet; every one ſeemed charmed with their day's entertainment. We got home before nine, when *Bob* and I enjoyed our happineſs again, by giving an account of it to mamma. And now, my dear *Sophy*, having already drawn out this epiſtle to ſo prodigious a length, I cannot poſſibly begin a new ſubject; but, without waiting for a return, you may expect to hear from me again in a few days. Mamma joins me in compliments to the admiral; and do you, my dear *Sophy*, accept, as uſual, of the beſt wiſhes of your

Friend and ſervant,

A. MONTAGUE.

Miſs MONTAGUE *to Miſs* OSMOND.

ACcording to my promiſe, my dear *Sophy*, I write to you, without waiting a return to my laſt. You remember, I wrote you, mamma was prevented going with us on our party of pleaſure, on account of my uncle being to wait on her about particular buſineſs. That night, after my couſin *Bob* went to his bed-chamber, mamma aſked me, "if I was not curious to know the "import of my uncle' viſit?" I anſwered, "ſhe made me ſo by the "preſent gravity of her look; but "that I had never once thought of "it, from the time ſhe received the "meſſage." "Sit down, *Alicia*," (for I was going for my night-cloaths) "I want to talk ſeriouſly to you. "You have been," ſaid ſhe, "my

"dear,

" dear, as yet unacquainted with the
" cares of the world. All your life
" has been one uninterrupted ſeries of
" pleaſure. From the natural good-
" neſs of your temper, you have not
" even experienced the little croſſes,
" which but very few eſcape in their
" early years. But, as I have often
" told you, youth is the only time
" exempt from the troubles of life:
" ſo reaſon requires us to look for-
" ward, and, by our prudence, pre-
" vent, as far as lies in our power,
" thoſe inconveniencies, to which we
" muſt otherwiſe be neceſſarily ex-
" poſed. You are not ignorant,
" *Alicia*, of your want of fortune.
" The misfortunes of your infancy
" you are no ſtranger to. It has
" been my endeavour to point out
" to you, from my own experience,
" the viciſſitudes of life; and it has al-

" ways given me pleaſure to hear your " ſenſible and juſt obſervations."

" Alas," ſaid I, " deareſt ma- " dam, what has my uncle told you, " that occaſions you thus to prepare " me, as it were, for bad news. I " hope, my dear mamma, whatever " it is, I ſhall, by your example, " bear it as I ought; or, if it is any " thing, as you ſeem to ſignify, " which can be prevented by pru- " dence, you know I will be directed " in every thing by you."

Mamma ſeemed affected; yet, ſmiling, took my hand. " You need " not be afraid," ſaid ſhe, " my dear " *Alicia*, your uncle has brought " me no bad news. On the con- " trary, he has, by a propoſal of " marriage betwixt your couſin and " you, given me a view of pre- " venting your being left deſtitute,

" ſhould providence deprive you of
" your mother."

Judge, my dear *Sophy*, of my ſurprize. " Good heavens," ſaid I, " madam, is it poſſible, that the " dread of an evil, which may ne- " ver happen, ſhould make you ſo " ſolicitous for me as to perſuade " me to accept a huſband, who un- " doubtedly would render me for- " ever unhappy? Not to mention, " my dear mamma, the extreme ig- " norance of my couſin—can two " perſons, whoſe taſte, whoſe in- " clinations, are intirely oppoſite, " ever expect to live tolerably eaſy? " Will the troubles of life, which " you tell me are unavoidable, be " leſſened with a conſtant compa- " nion, whom I can never eſteem?" Mamma, with a ſigh, returned, " My " dear *Alicia*, 'tis a few years ago " ſince I reſolved to have you taught

" a trade. Your want of fortune " made me think it abſolutely ne- " ceſſary: but on adviſing with " your aunts, they, by ſeveral ex- " amples, repreſented the danger of " doing ſo; at the ſame time de- " ſired me not to be uneaſy on your " account (my health at that time " being far from being good) for " that, if heaven deprived you of " your mother, you ſhould live with " either of them you choſe, and " be as one of their own. This ſoon " altered my reſolution; but," continued ſhe, " though I have no doubt " of their ſincere regard for you, I " conſider their life as equally un- " certain with mine, and their power " of leaving you independent as no " greater. On this account, my dear " *Alicia*, I cannot help being anxious " to ſee you married. From your " youth and inexperience, you pro-

" bably

" bably think you may have many
" offers, more ſuitable to your in-
" clination: no doubt there is ſome
" chance that you may; but be-
" lieve me, my dear *Alicia*, the lux-
" ury and extravagance of the age
" is ſuch, that there are very few
" gentlemen, but what are ambi-
" tious of having a fortune with a
" wife, to enable them to ſupport
" their rank and the additional ex-
" pence of a family. Yet, after all
" I have ſaid, I ſhall be far from
" endeavouring to perſuade you
" againſt your inclination. I only
" deſire you to think of it ſeriouſly,
" and not raſhly refuſe your couſin,
" whoſe fortune is ſo conſiderable."

You may eaſily imagine, my dear *Sophy*, that this converſation threw a damp on my ſpirits. I promiſed to think of it deliberately; and, with the tear in my eye, retired to my bed-

bed-chamber. But could it, my dear *Sophy*, admit of a moment's conſideration? You know my couſin: and do you think it poſſible, that I can ever bring myſelf to look upon any hardſhip I may meet with as worſe than being united to a clown, whoſe behaviour I ſhould always be aſhamed of? Ah! ſaid I to myſelf, is there no way that I could be uſefully employed? what a diſmal proſpect has my mother ſet before me! yet, dark as it is, providence may, perhaps, diſpel the cloud: then, why ſhould I, in deſpair, cloſe the ſcene, and give my hand to a man, whom my heart ſhudders but to think on! In ſhort, my dear, I reſolved to avoid the ſin and the puniſhment. In the morning, I acquainted mamma with my reſolution. She acquieſced very readily, and, indeed, I ſcarcely think ſhe ever expected my compliance.

pliance. She immediately wrote to my uncle, and thanked him for the reſpect he had ſhewn her, and the good opinion he had of me: at the ſame time ſaid, "ſhe was ſorry to in-"form him, that I was quite averſe to "the propoſed match, and that ſhe "could not endeavour to perſuade "me againſt my inclination, though "ſo much to my advantage." Now, you ſee, my dear *Sophy*, ſuch is my ſituation, that I ought to be very humble and even thankful, if a rational creature condeſcends to pay his addreſſes to me.

Mamma has received a card this moment from lord *Dey*, deſiring the favour of my company to a private concert this evening at the earl's. I muſt leave off writing to practice ſome new airs on the harpſichord; which, I know, I ſhall be obliged to play over at the earl's. Muſic

and

and agreeable company ſhall diſſipate my cares. For the preſent, mamma joins me in compliments. *Bob* ſends you his love, and deſires you to ſet him down in the liſt of your admirers. Adieu,

A. M.

Miſs ENCROM *to Miſs* OSMOND.

QUITE over-run, my dear *Sophy*, is your *Caroline* with the vapours: the dreadful occaſion of which you ſhall hear. About two hours ago, walking in the garden alone, my thoughts unclouded as the ſky in a fine ſummer-evening, warbling an air, ſweet as the notes of the nightingale; who ſhould enter the walk but my companion, the fair *Alicia*. With ſteps light as air, our eyes equally

equally ſparkling, we met, and ſeemed to promiſe, from our looks, an additional pleaſure from converſation, while arm in arm we walked along the terrace, ſhe told me, that, "ſince "ſhe had the pleaſure of ſeeing me, "ſhe had received a propoſal of "marriage." "From whom," ſaid I, "my dear *Alicia?* make haſte, "and tell me all about it." She then informed me, as it ſeems ſhe has already done you, "that the "gentle ſwain was no other than "her couſin *Hopeful.*" With a loud laugh, which re-ecchoed from afar, I proclaimed, "*Alicia* hath charms to "ſooth a ſavage beaſt!" I was quite delighted at the thoughts of the courtſhip, when, to my great diſappointment, ſhe told me, "ſhe had ſent him a flat "denial, without giving him leave "to ſpeak for himſelf." She then gave me all the particulars of the

con-

converſation ſhe had with her mother on the ſubject, and concluded with telling me very ſeriouſly, " ſhe did " not think either her or I had any " chance of being married." With a ſtart, as fearful as if I had ſeen a ghoſt, or rather as if I had believed her to be a true predeſtinarian, did my heart ſink within me.

But to be ſerious, *Sophy*, I am a little concerned about *Alicia*. Mrs. *Montague*, though always chearful, is far from being in a good ſtate of health. Should *Alicia* loſe her, which heaven forbid, her going to the North country, and being dependent on her relations, who perhaps may be inſenſible of her merit, cannot be an agreeable ſituation. I wiſh only (were what I fear to happen) that I had it in my power to have her as my conſtant companion. But lady *Encrom* continues to rule here with a high hand,

hand, while I have no more to ſay in my father's houſe, than if I were a mere girl in hanging ſleeves. Were I not naturally of a chearful diſpoſition, I ſhould certainly take the vapours in earneſt. I have got nothing new, that would in the leaſt entertain you. I was the other night at a concert at the earl of *Dey*'s. I need not tell you the company. You know all thoſe who are generally invited; nor need I ſay we ſpent an agreeable evening. I have loſt hopes intirely, *Sophy*, of ſeeing dear *London*. Lady *Encrom*, who grudges every thing beſtowed on me, will never conſent to my going to a place, where, without affronting herſelf, ſhe could not keep me on ſhort allowance, as ſhe does at home.

But now, my dear *Sophy*, before I conclude, cannot you, who have ſo many humble ſervants, and can only

only favour one, recommend your two friends? cannot you repreſent us in a juſt light, as two beautiful virgins, blooming as the ſpring, who, being confined from the ſight of people of taſte, are likely to wither here, and die unlamented? Who knows, but prompted by curioſity, the ſpirit of matrimony in their head, they may come down, and, take a view of us? their hearts ſoftened by diſappointment, it is impoſſible our charms can fail making a new impreſſion upon them.

I have juſt now had a meſſage from *Alicia*. Her mamma, ſhe ſays, is extremely ill. She begs I will ſee her as ſoon as poſſible; I hope in God ſhe is not yet in danger, I cannot help being very uneaſy. Her natural chearfulneſs makes thoſe, who ſee her often, not ſo ſenſible of her decline, as others; but lady *Encrom*

ſays,

ſays, ſhe obſerved a viſible alteration in her looks, for the worſe, the other night at the earl of *Dey*'s. With what levity have I wrote moſt part of this epiſtle? God forgive me! in haſte.

Adieu.

C. ENCROM.

Miſs ENCROM *to Miſs* OSMOND.

My dear *Sophy*,

THE fears which I expreſſed for Mrs. *Montague*, have every day increaſed ſince my laſt. Doctor *R*—— gives it as his opinion, that a few days will be the utmoſt period of her life. Oh, *Sophy*, how does my heart ſympathize with our dear friend, the tender, the affectionate

Alicia! what a loſs will ſhe ſuſtain by the death of ſuch a mother! how often have you and I envyed her happineſs? Alas, my dear, there is nothing in this life worth coveting. The more happy we have been, afflictions, when they come, ſink the deeper. *Alicia* behaves with the greateſt compoſure; yet never did I ſee grief more viſible in a countenance. She ſaid to me a few days ago, "Oh, "my *Caroline*, could I ever have "enjoyed a moment's pleaſure, had "I ſuppoſed my deareſt mother to "have been in danger! but, to keep "me from confinement, ſhe has ex-"erted herſelf beyond her ſtrength. "Oh that I could ſhed tears to give "eaſe to this troubled heart! Lord "ſupport me in this time of trial!" I ſaid all I could to comfort her; but, alas, what could I ſay on ſuch an occaſion!

I was

I was two hours in the chamber yeſterday with Mrs. *Montague*; ſhe ſat in her eaſy chair, ſupported by pillows; her face, tho' pale as aſhes, wore a ſmile, which ſhewed the ſerenity of her mind. When *Alicia* went out of the room, ſhe expreſſed her fears to me, that the cloſe attendance ſhe gave her would hurt her health. "I wiſh, my dear miſs *Encrom*," ſaid ſhe, "you would adviſe her againſt it. Never did my "*Alicia* but in this ſeem to have a "wiſh to do what I did not approve "of. I know it proceeds from her "affection: but, alas, ſhe does not "conſider, that health, which is "the greateſt worldly bleſſing to the "great and affluent, is ſtill of more "conſequence to thoſe who are otherwiſe. Perſons, who live in a ſtate "of dependence, and who have no "near relations, never fail, by want

"of

" of health, to become a burthen not " only to themſelves, but to all " about them. I am loth to urge " theſe arguments to *Alicia*; but do " you, Miſs *Emcrom*, tell her, that " you ſee it makes me uneaſy." I promiſed to obey her, and in ſome meaſure ſucceeded.

Oh, my dear *Sophy*, Mrs. *Montague* is gone! I've this moment had a meſſage from Mrs. *Elliot*. I fly in haſte to my *Alicia*.

I am returned from the houſe of mourning. Ah, *Sophy*, my heart is almoſt broken. A ſight of our *Alicia* would move a heart of adamant; I was unable to ſtay; and yet I am, if poſſible, more diſtreſſed at having left her. I ſhall go again in a few hours. When I went to the houſe, I was told by Mrs. *Elliot*, who had been there ſome days, that miſs *Montague* was in the room alone with the corpſe,

corpſe, and would not be prevailed on to leave it. She was in hopes I would prevail on her, and had ſent for me on purpoſe.

A mournful ſilence reigned through the whole houſe. My heart almoſt failing, I walked ſoftly to the chamber, as if afraid to diſturb the aſhes of the dead. When I opened the door, I beheld *Alicia* kneeling at the bedſide of her lifeleſs parent. She obſerved me not. I was unable to contain myſelf longer; but threw myſelf in a chair, and gave way to my tears. My ſobs made her turn about; and ſeeing me, ſhe aroſe, and, with a wildneſs in her look, which I ſhall never forget, ſaid, "Why do you cry, miſs *Encrom*, "let us have patience; you and "I, perhaps, may ſoon be releaſed "from this world of woe. See there "my dear mamma (going to the

" bed-ſide, and looking in her face)
" look *Caroline*, how mild ſhe ap-
" pears. Yes, my deareſt parent,
" you are at reſt, and have quitted
" all your cares; all your fears and
" anxiety for your *Alicia* are over,
" and you are happy. But where am
" I! (ſtill looking in her face)
" Ah! why am I left behind! Shall
" one ſo young as I be left, with-
" out a parent, without a guide, to
" direct my future ſteps through a
" vain world!" " Oh, my deareſt
" *Alicia*" ſaid I, going to her, and throwing my arms about her neck, " let me entreat you to leave this
" apartment, and endeavour to get
" a little reſt. Remember, your
" mamma was againſt your cloſe at-
" tendance when alive; now that
" there is no occaſion, my *Ali-*
" *cia* will remember the inſtructions
" of her mother by taking care of

" her

" her own health." " Huſh," ſaid ſhe, " *Caroline*, I am perfectly well: " my attendance will of courſe be " ſhort. On *Friday* my parent will " be laid in the houſe appointed " for all living. Till then I muſt " look at her, and recollect all ſhe " ſhe ſaid to me. My memory is " bad; my head is confuſed; but " I know I ſhall remember it all."

" Want of ſleep," ſaid I, " *Ali-* " *cia*, is the cauſe of your memory " being bad. Let me beſeech you " to lie down; you may return here " again when you awake." Lady *Bellmount* came in. She and I at laſt prevailed on her to go to her bed-chamber, and lie down. I left her aſleep. God grant ſhe may be more herſelf when ſhe awakes; for though ſhe does not talk inſenſibly, her look alarms me. I will not conclude my letter till I ſee her again.

Saturday Morning.

The funeral is over, and, God be thanked, my *Alicia* as well as can be expected. When I came here again, I found her all in tears. She ſeemed not inclined to talk as before. Every one about her was pleaſed with the change. She aſked not to return to the corpſe, but continued in her chamber till the funeral was over. Her uncle Mr. *Montague* inquired of me in what manner *Alicia* was to be diſpoſed of. I told him ſhe had not ſpoke to me on the ſubject, and that I thought it was better ſhe ſhould compoſe herſelf for a day or two, before he put ſuch a queſtion to her. In his blunt way, he bade me tell her when I thought it convenient, "that ſhe ſhould be welcome to his "houſe as ſoon as ſhe pleaſed."

Lady

Lady *Encrom*, contrary to her uſual temper, has been ſo good as to allow me to ſtay with *Alicia* for ſome days. This morning ſeeing her quite compoſed, I aſked her when ſhe had heard from the North. She anſwered, with a heavy ſigh, "that ſhe had "heard a few days ago, and that "her aunts had not been ſo kind on "this occaſion as ſhe thought they "would have been." "Do you "intend," ſaid I, "my dear *Ali-* "*cia*, to go and live with either of "them?" "No," ſhe returned; "ſhe was certain of never being in- "vited." I ſaid no more. She ſeemed uneaſy. I do not ſuppoſe ſhe will accept of her uncle's invitation, on account of his late propoſal. Lady *Bellmount*, and, indeed, every one here, ſuppoſes ſhe will go to Sir *Oliver M'Kenzie*'s. After what ſhe ſaid, I don't know what to think;

but, in all probability, I ſhall loſe the company of my beſt and deareſt friend. God grant ſhe may be ſituated as ſhe deſerves. I will now, my dear *Sophy*, conclude. *Alicia* has this moment deſired me to write, and to acquaint you with her mother's death. I told her I had done ſo already. She has been writing, ſhe ſays, to her aunts, and ſhe will ſhew me the contents. I am happy to find her ſo compoſed. She will expect, no doubt, to hear from you ſoon. Adieu, my dear *Sophy*. God ſend us as happy a proſpect at our latter end, as, in all appearance, had the good Mrs. *Montague*.

C. ENCROM.

Miſs

Miſs OSMOND *to Miſs* MONTAGUE.

My dear *Alicia*,

'TIS impoſſible for me to ſay how much I ſympathize with you in your diſtreſs. The loſs of ſo good a parent claims the ſincereſt ſorrow. But, my dear girl, as our grief cannot poſſibly avail us, we ought to do every thing in our power to keep it within due bounds, and not ſuffer it to injure our health, and thus diſqualify us for performing the duties, or enjoying the comforts of life. Miſs *Encrom* writes me word, that you are as yet undetermined where you are to live; and that your aunts have neither come near you, nor given you an invitation to their houſe. The firſt, conſidering the diſtance, may, perhaps, be quite inconvenient; and as for the laſt, they cer-

tainly judge very prudently, not to invite you to the North. In your preſent melancholy diſpoſition, you may think it beſt to retire to the country; but any one elſe, who has your good at heart, muſt think it very improper. Your aunts, I dare ſay, have heard of the regard all your acquaintance have for you, and that there are few of them but would wiſh to have it in their power to contribute to your happineſs, as thinking it added to their own. This, I aſſure you, is my caſe; and the greateſt favour my dear *Alicia* can confer on me, is to leave ——, and immediately come and live with me. I need not ſay how happy I will think myſelf with ſuch a companion. My father joins me in begging your company, and will have me, as ſoon as I get your conſent (which I will not give myſelf leave

to

to doubt) to go down to ——, and bring you up to *London.*

I beg, my dear, you will write me word by the return of the poſt; for I ſhall be quite impatient till I hear from you. Don't allow the thoughts of crowds of company to make you uneaſy. By a perpetual ſucceſſion of the ſame thing, I begin to be tired, and my father rejoices at the thoughts of my not being ſo much in company when I get a companion ſo agreeable to my wiſh. I write to miſs *Encrom* by the ſame poſt. I am, my dear *Alicia*, with the greateſt regard,

Your ſincere friend,

SOPHIA OSMOND.

Miſs MONTAGUE *to Miſs* OSMOND.

My dear *Sophy*,

WERE it poſſible for me to feel any pleaſure, your letter would certainly have inſpired me with it. But, alas! my dear, as you obſerve, I am unable to judge what is beſt for me; and I think, at preſent, I am abſolutely incapable of any agreeable ſenſation. But tho' this be the caſe, I am very ſenſible of your kind intention, and can eaſily ſee the generoſity of your ſentiments. With regard to my auuts not having invited me to the North, your goodneſs makes you put too favourable a conſtruction upon it. For, Oh! my *Sophy*, their unkindneſs pained the heart of my dear mother, and I don't know but it haſtened her death. Your good-

goodneſs, my dear *Sophy*, forbids me to conceal any thing from you, and even prompts me to ſhew you, that I am not, what you ſuppoſe, one whom every one eſteems, and would be happy to have with them. On the contrary, I can boaſt of no ſincere friend who ſeems anxious about me, but my *Caroline* and yourſelf. My mother, unknown to me, had wrote my aunts the danger ſhe was in; and, a few days before her death, ſhe received anſwers to her letters. On reading them, ſhe ſeemed very much affected; and, looking on me, burſt into tears "My dear *Alicia*," ſaid ſhe, "you "ſee my weakneſs: I am afraid of "leaving you to the mercy of an "unfriendly world: read your aunts "letters, and ſee the cauſe of my "emotion." I will here, my dear *Sophy*, tranſcribe them for your peruſal; the firſt from Mrs. *Grant*.

" My dear ſiſter,

" I Am extremely ſorry to hear, " that the phyſicians think you " in ſuch danger. I hope they may " be miſtaken. As to lady *M'Ken-* " *zie*'s propoſal of *Alicia* living with " her, ſhe is beſt judge, whether it " will be as convenient now as when " ſhe made it; for my own part, it " is not poſſible I can make the ſame " offer I did then. My children are " now grown up, and are very ex- " penſive; and I know very well, " I could not propoſe to Mr. *Grant*, " to bring *Alicia* here, who would " undoubtedly expect to be on an " equal footing with them. Neither " lady *M'Kenzie* nor I remember our " adviſing you againſt bringing up " *Alicia* to buſineſs. If we did, it " was certainly wrong; tho' un- " undoubtedly we thought otherwiſe

" at

" at the time. I would not have
" you, my dear ſiſter, make your-
" ſelf uneaſy. *Alicia* has got a
" good education, and will make
" an excellent governeſs for any
" young lady. There will be no
" difficulty in getting her recom-
" mended; and I hope my niece
" has more ſenſe than to think her-
" ſelf above being in that ſtation,
" when ſhe has no view of being
" otherwiſe provided. This, my
" dear ſiſter, I think it beſt to tell
" you plainly, as *Alicia* will be the
" better for your advice. Mr. *Grant*
" joins me in compliments, and
" begs you will take care of your-
" ſelf. You don't know the good
" effect it may have. *Alicia* may
" be always certain of my beſt ad-
" vice; and I am, my dear ſiſter,

" Yours affectionately,

" A. GRANT."

I will

I will now, my dear *Sophy*, give you the contents of Lady *M'Kenzie*'s letter, which was as follows:

My dear ſiſter,

"IT gives me great pain to hear "of your illneſs; yet I would "fain think, it is not ſo bad with "you as the phyſicians have made "you imagine. Keep a good heart, "which you will find is the beſt "medicine, and I hope there will "be no fear of you. *Alicia*'s "concern is very natural. You "have been an affectionate parent; "and if you have erred in any "thing, it has been in being too "indulgent; I mean, in bring-"ing her up as if ſhe had a fortune "to depend on, which, I am afraid, "may prove a loſs to her. I ſhould "be ſorry, my dear ſiſter, to give

"you

" you any uneaſineſs; yet I could
" not forgive myſelf, were I to con-
" ceal the impoſſibility of my aſking
" *Alicia* to *Mountain-Hall*. I will
" frankly own to you my reaſons,
" and I truſt you have more good
" ſenſe than not to think them ſuf-
" ficient. Since my ſon, *Bob*, ſpent
" a few weeks with you at ——,
" both Sir *Oliver* and I are very
" ſenſible, that *Alicia* has made an
" impreſſion on his heart. This,
" you may believe, has given us great
" uneaſineſs, on account of his youth,
" and its being quite improper for
" him to marry one without a for-
" tune, as Sir *Oliver* cannot afford
" to part with any of his eſtate in
" his own life-time. I confeſs to
" you, we have other views for *Bob*.
" You muſt be ſenſible, my dear
" ſiſter, that Sir *Oliver* and I would
" be very imprudent, were we to

" bring

" bring my niece here, to run the
" hazard of renewing a flame, which
" is, in a great meaſure, tho' with
" ſome difficulty, extinguiſhed.

" You may believe it would make
" me happy to hear of *Alicia*'s be-
" ing well married; and Sir *Oliver*
" deſires me to acquaint you, that,
" ſhould what your phyſicians are
" afraid of happen, which, I hope,
" will not be the caſe, he will ve-
" ry chearfully contribute, with her
" other relations, in being at the
" expence of her cloaths, in a mo-
" derate way, and even her board,
" if none of her relations think it
" convenient for her to live with
" them. I really think, my dear
" ſiſter, you was too blame in not
" perſuading her to accept of her
" couſin *Montague*. Were ſhe again
" to have the offer of him, I hope
" ſhe would not be ſo fooliſh as to

" refuſe

" refuſe him. I flatter myſelf, dear " ſiſter, that your next will bring " me the agreeable account of your " being out of danger. I hope " you will live and ſee *Alicia* hap- " pily ſettled. It is her duty to eaſe " you of your anxiety on her ac- " count, as ſoon as it is in her " power. Sir *Oliver* joins me in " ſincere wiſhes for your recovery; " with our compliments to *Alicia*, " I conclude,

" Your affectionate,

" And loving ſiſter."

You'll perhaps think, my dear *Sophy*, I am too blame in thinking any of theſe letters unkind. I confeſs to you, my mother, after the firſt emotion of her grief on reading them, endeavoured to perſuade me they were other-

otherwiſe. To make her as eaſy as poſſible, I ſeemed convinced; but I could eaſily perceive that her anxiety to make me think ſo, proceeded from her fears of my loſing the friendſhip of thoſe, whom ſhe once thought ſhe could depend on, and were ſtill the only perſons, whom ſhe could reaſonably expect to adviſe or aſſiſt me. She aſked me which of the propoſals I moſt approved of: while my heart was ready to burſt, I anſwered, "that if I ſtood in need of "aſſiſtance, I would follow the ad-"vice of Mrs. *Grant*, and not ac-"cept of a contribution from my "friends, as long as I was able to "do otherwiſe. She approved of "my choice, and gave me many "advices, which I hope will make "a laſting impreſſion on my mind. "She particularly repreſented to me "the difference between a right and

a wrong

" a wrong pride; that the firſt is an " ornament to our ſex, while the " other leads to folly and ruin."

My dear mother grew every day worſe. The morning before ſhe died, ſhe laid her clay-cold hand on mine, while I, unable to ſpeak, ſat on her bed-ſide. " My deareſt *Alicia*," ſaid ſhe, " don't afflict yourſelf. Con- " ſider death, not as an event we " have reaſon to dread, but, on the " contrary, as a certain friend to the " virtuous, and one that puts a pe- " riod to all their cares. In few " words, let me adviſe you to con- " ſult that faithful monitor, which " you will find in your own breaſt: " pray to be enabled to obey its " dictates, and be aſſured, heaven " will ſtrengthen you to perform " them." And, indeed, my dear *Sophy*, though I find myſelf incapable of taſting any pleaſure, yet I am more

more compoſed and eaſy than I imagined I could have been in ſuch a ſituation.

You will ſee, my dear *Sophy*, by what I have already told you, that it would be quite improper for me to accept your kind invitation. At preſent, I ſhall find no difficulty, from the ſuggeſtions of a wrong pride, to enter into my new ſtation. I rather think my being employed in doing my duty, in endeavouring to be of ſome uſe in the world, will keep me in a great meaſure, from being diſcontented at my own inſignificance. Should I live with my dear *Sophy* for ſome time; ſhould I, as ſhe ſeems to wiſh, renew my taſte for thoſe pleaſures which I cannot afford; might not that pride, which my dear parent warned me to beware of, ſpring up again in my mind? I confeſs to you, my dear *Sophy*, I have reaſon to believe there

are

are ſome roots of it in my breaſt. At preſent, I could bear, with indifference, the overſtrained complaiſance of thoſe, who, from an affected delicacy, would condeſcend to treat me with reſpect; while their diſtant behaviour and their cold and ſtudied addreſs but ill agree with the generous ſentiments of friendſhip: while others, of much the ſame diſpoſition, would careleſsly, or, perhaps, with a full ſtare, paſs by, as if they reproached me, for having once pretended to be their equal. Such, my dear, have I obſerved to be the general behaviour of thoſe of our ſex, who live at eaſe, to ſuch as are obliged to exert their little abilities, in bringing themſelves honeſtly through the world. While my heart, my dear *Sophy*, is in a proper frame; while the words of my dear parent are ſtill freſh in my memory, I will endea-

endeavour to do my duty, and be content with the portion which providence ſeems to have allotted me.

I have juſt now received a return to a letter I wrote to lady *M'Kenzie*. She approves of my reſolution, and acquaints me, that ſhe has wrote to lady *Pomfret* in my favour, who, ſhe thinks, will be happy in receiving me as a governeſs for her two daughters. God grant that the young creatures may profit under my care. From what I have wrote, you will be anxious to know, whether or not my couſin, *Bob*, made his addreſſes to me. It may appear ſtrange; but I give you my word, I am doubtful whether he did or not. And by what my aunt writes, it would ſeem, he had not ſpoke more plainly to his father and mother; but, by his behaviour, has left us equally to imagine the ſituation of his heart.

I do not pretend to be judge of a conduct of this kind; but obedience to parents is a duty, which, certainly, ought to be ſtrictly obſerved: and ſince my aunt and uncle would diſapprove of me for a daughter, I ought to be very thankful, that my heart is not ſo far engaged as to contradict my reaſon. I hope, my dear *Sophy* will continue her goodneſs in writing to me; and do you, and the good admiral, accept the beſt wiſhes of her, who, with a grateful heart, muſt ever remember your kindneſs. I am, my dear *Sophy*,

Yours, &c.

A. MONTAGUE.

When miſs *Oſmond* had read the above letter, ſhe immediately gave it to her father, who, on peruſing it,

it, d—ned her aunts for two old b—s, her uncles for ſneaking mean-ſpirited raſcals, and ſwore that the young *M'Kenzie* could not deſerve her. "Go," ſaid he, "*Sophy*, by "all means, and endeavour to pre-"vail on your friend to change her "reſolution. Tell her, ſhe ſhall have "no occaſion to accept of the ſcanty "contribution of ſuch relations; "nor ſhall the daughter of the "brave major *Montague*, while I can "prevent it, be a governante to "the firſt lady in *Chriſtendom*." Miſs *Oſmond* was quite happy to hear her father expreſs himſelf ſo warmly in favour of her friend, and accordingly ſet out next morning for ——.

Miſs *Encrom* was ſtill with miſs *Montague*, and had aſſiſted her in receiving compliments of condolence from many who were glad, that cuſtom allowed them to ſatisfy their curioſity

rioſity, in ſeeing how the celebrated miſs *Montague* would behave on an event, which they, by that time, underſtood, put it out of her power to appear as ſhe had done formerly. Miſs *Crowfit* and her mamma had been there, who, before they returned home, made ſeveral flying viſits, and acquainted thoſe ladies who had not yet made theirs to miſs *Montague*, how ſhe was dreſſed from her crape hood down to her ſhoe buckles. At lady *Edwin*'s, where there was a full circle, Mrs. *Crowfit* aſſured the company they would be perfectly amazed to ſee every thing ſo genteel. Had ſhe been left a fortune of ten thouſand pounds, miſs could not have been better dreſt, nor received her company in a more elegant manner. Nay, ſaid miſs *Crowfit*, there was no deficiency in her dreſs, that's certain: but did not you think,

mamma, ſhe looked extremely ill? indeed I always thought Miſs *Montague* was a beauty, that would ſoon fade. A beauty! *Nancy*—She was going to proceed, when lord *L*—— entered, and payed his compliments to the company.

His lordſhip was no ſooner ſeated, than lady *Edwin* inquired if he had been viſiting miſs *Montague* ſince her mother's death. "Upon my ſoul," ſaid his lordſhip, "I ſhould have waited "upon her before now; but I was "informed ſhe was ſo afflicted for "the old lady, that I was afraid I "ſhould not have got admittance." "So ſhe may be afflicted, poor girl," replied her ladyſhip, "ſhe has no-"thing to depend on, ſince her mo-"ther's death: the fewer viſits ſhe "receives now from people of rank "the better." "Your ladyſhip is "extremely right," ſaid Mrs. *Crow-*

fit:

ſit: "I ſhould not have thought of "*Nancy* and me going, had I not "heard, that all the people of faſhion "in town had either gone or intended "going. I underſtood ſome time "ago, that miſs *Montague* was to "go to the North country, amongſt "her mother's relations; but I now "hear it whiſpered ſhe muſt think "of providing for herſelf; none of "her relations chuſing to be at the "expence of keeping a fine lady, "which her mother has fooliſhly "brought her up." Moſt of this good-natured company failed not to enlarge on the folly of the mother; and, with expreſſions of pity, exulting in their own ſecurity, wiſhed ſhe might be kept from the ſnares, which young creatures in her ſituation were liable to fall into. His lordſhip ſaid very little, and ſoon took his leave.

You'll no doubt, gentle reader, imagine, he was ſhocked at the converſation of theſe ladies, and, being ſcarce able to contain his indignation within the bounds of politeneſs, left the company. But in this I muſt undeceive you. He indeed went home on account of miſs *Montague*, but it was to ruminate on her charms, which he thought would not be in the leaſt diminiſhed: at the ſame time, that reſpect with which he had always beheld her, was greatly leſſened, on finding ſhe was deſerted by her own ſex, whoſe pity, in the way it was expreſſed, bordered on contempt. He therefore concluded, from the notion he had of the virtue of the fair, and indeed from what they ſeemed to have of one another, that miſs *Montague* would very eaſily fall into the ſnare, which her pitying friends

friends ſeemed to think would be the conſequence of her preſent diſtreſs.

Rejoicing at the proſpect of his good fortune, and impatient of delay, he ſat down, and wrote her the following billet-doux.

" Madam,

" YOUR beauty, which has long
" been the object of my admira-
" tion, has, I find, made ſo deep an
" impreſſion on my heart, as not to
" be erazed by abſence. On the
" contrary, I find it impoſſible to
" conceal any longer a flame, which
" burns too fierce to wait till I can
" have the happineſs of ſeeing you:
" I therefore, with a heart truly ſen-
" ſible of your divine perfections,
" beg you will hide yourſelf no
" longer; but, with that amiable
" ſweetneſs and good-nature, which
" is a real ornament to beauty, con-

" ſent to allow me to wait on you
" to-morrow morning, when, I flat-
" ter myſelf, I ſhall be able to make
" ſuch offers to my angel, as ſhall
" merit her acceptance. With heart
" and ſoul devoted to your pleaſure,
" I remain, deareſt creature,

" Your eternal ſlave."

One would imagine ſuch a letter as this, could not have been wrote by a perſon of common ſenſe to a lady, whoſe merit was ſo conſpicuous as miſs *Montague*'s; yet certain it is, his lordſhip was generally looked on as a modern fine gentleman. Miſs *Encrom* was ſitting with *Alicia*, when ſhe received this tender billet-doux. She read it over, and could ſcarce believe her own eyes. " Good heaven!" ſaid ſhe, with the tear in her eye, giving it to miſs *Encrom*,

Encrom, " what behaviour of mine " could encourage lord *L*—— to " ſuppoſe ſuch a propoſal would be " acceptable to me? Oh! my dear " *Caroline*, read, and tell me, if you " ever thought your friend would " have met with ſuch an inſult?" Miſs *Encrom*, though ſincerely concerned for *Alicia*, could not help ſmiling at the ridiculous ſtile of the epiſtle. " Why, my dear," ſaid ſhe, " ſhould you make yourſelf uneaſy " at his lordſhip's preſumption? I " confeſs, it is impoſſible to miſtake " his meaning; but let his folly be " his puniſhment." After returning the letter under a blank cover, by the ſervant who waited an anſwer, miſs *Encrom* was endeavouring all ſhe could to keep up *Alicia*'s ſpirits, who, from this inſult, ſaw her condition in a worſe light than ſhe had before conſidered it in, when the

door opened, and miſs *Oſmond* flew into her arms. 'Twas ſome minutes before either could ſpeak, miſs *Encrom* begging they would compoſe themſelves, while her own tears ſhewed ſhe was little leſs affected.

'Tis needleſs to enter into the particulars of their converſation. My reader is already acquainted with the intention of miſs *Oſmond*'s viſit. I need only ſay that ſhe failed not to uſe every argument that friendſhip could dictate, to prevail on *Alicia* to give over all thoughts of being a governeſs, and live with her as her friend and companion. Miſs *Encrom* likewiſe obſerved, that her mother's advice, which ſhe laid ſo much ſtreſs upon, was only given on her aunts cold letters; and that, no doubt, ſhe would have been very happy to have ſeen her have a proſpect of being ſo agreeably ſituated.

Alicia's

Alicia's reaſons for not complying, by degrees, grew weaker. Her own generoſity of temper led her to conſider, what pleaſure it would have given her, had ſhe been in miſs *Oſmond*'s place, to have had it in her power to do as ſhe was entreated to be done by. "Will it not then," ſaid ſhe, "be a wrong pride in "me, to deprive my friend of "what muſt give the greateſt plea-"ſure to a generous mind? and "ſhall I, when offered a ſafe aſylum "from the injuries of the world, "continue obſtinate in being what "heaven only knows whether or "not I am fit for?" To be brief, ſhe yielded to her friend's intreaties, on condition her aunts approved of the meaſure. Miſs *Oſmond* was happy at getting her conſent ſo far, having little doubt of their approbation; though both miſs *Encrom*

and ſhe gave it as their opinion, that ſhe had no reaſon to aſk her aunts advice in the matter But this ſhe could not be convinced of: ſo accordingly ſhe wrote to both lady *M'Kenzie* and Mrs. *Grant*; and, in the mean time, diſpoſed of the furniture of the houſe.

Miſs *Oſmond* continued at —— with *Alicia*, till ſhe got a return to her letters, and till every thing was ſettled. Lady *M'Kenzie* and Mrs. *Grant* wrote, that they were extremely happy ſhe had it in her power to be ſo agreeably ſituated; and each of them incloſed a twenty pound note, which they hinted they would give her annually, to enable her to appear as their niece, and the companion of miſs *Oſmond*.

Alicia received it with all the gratitude imaginable, nor would ſhe be perſuaded by miſs *Oſmond*, on any account,

count, to return it. "Would you "have me, my dear *Sophy*," ſaid ſhe, "affront my relations, by re- "fuſing their kind preſent? what "title have I to expect they ſhould "do ſo much for me? ſhall favours "be ſcorned becauſe they are not "ſo great, as the generoſity of our "friend firſt intended? I confeſs, "I felt a kind of reſentment at "their behaviour, which reaſon ſhews "me was ungrateful. Had I kept "to my reſolution of being a go- "verneſs, I ſhould not, perhaps, "have had occaſion for more than "what would be given me as my "due. But as my relations know, "I am to depend entirely on obli- "gations, how can I, without ſay- "ing I ſcorn to be obliged to them, "refuſe their preſent." Miſs *Oſ- mond* ſaid, "ſhe ſaw there was no "arguing againſt her; but, for her

" part, were ſhe in her place, ſhe " could never bring herſelf to ac- " cept of the moſt trifling obliga- " tion from one of them."

Lord *L.* on his ſervant's return with a letter, received it with impatience, and when he had broke the ſeal, and ſaw his own epiſtle, bit his lip, and walked up and down his chamber for an hour or two, heartily vexed. At firſt his head was full of ſchemes, how to bring down the pride of this beauty, who had ſcorned to return him an anſwer; but, on more deliberate thoughts, he judged it beſt to put up with the diſappointment: he therefore wiſely reſolved to think no more of her, unleſs a favourable opportunity offered, which he did not yet entirely deſpair of. Miſs *Montague* did not leave ——, till ſhe had returned the viſits of her acquaintance, in which miſs *Oſmond* accom-

accompanied her. The compliments of ſorrow, which were now abundantly beſtowed on parting with theſe two ladies, like others of the ſame kind, immediately vaniſhed into air. On miſs *Encrom*'s heart only remained the impreſſion of grief: the real affection ſhe had for *Alicia* was unmixed with envy, that baneful paſſion, and particular invader of female friendſhip. Miſs *Montague* was no leſs affected; they parted with reciprocal promiſes to keep up a regular correſpondence by letter, and to communicate to each other every thing material which happened to either; as alſo to amuſe each other with ſuch obſervations as daily occurred from the various incidents of human life. But here let me not omit a viſit *Alicia* received from her uncle, *Humphrey*, who made her an offer in form of being miſtreſs of his houſe, adding,

that he hoped *Thomas* and ſhe would ſoon make up matters, when they had an opportunity of being often together. Miſs *Montague* thanked her uncle for his kindneſs, which ſhe owned ſhe did not merit from her refuſal of her couſin; but, as ſhe could not help being fully determined againſt having him, ſhe thought it would be quite wrong, at any rate, to accept his invitation. She, in as genteel a manner as was poſſible, acquainted him with her intention of going to *London* with miſs *Oſmond*; to which he ſaid, "She "might do as ſhe pleaſed, and that "if ſhe did repent, as he never had "any great notion of your *London* "madams, ſhe might, perhaps, find "it too late."

Alicia had no other relation on her father's ſide to acquaint of her going. Her grandfather had, indeed, lived ſo recluſe a life, that it is probable,

bable, if he had any, they had not thought worth their while to inquire after him. Her uncle was not much better; and the major having been little at home, and having acquired ſo many friends by his own merit, had never thought of examining into the genealogy of his family.

Our young ladies left ——, as privately as they could. *Alicia*'s ſpirits being low, ſhe eaſily prevailed on miſs *Oſmond* to avoid being eſcorted by any of the beaux or belles in town, who, undoubtedly, would have attended them, if they had ſeen it would be agreeable. They arrived in *London* without any accident, and were received by the admiral with great joy. He had been quite impatient for his daughter's return, and was now happy ſhe had not come without her errand.

Were

Were I to tranſcribe the letters, which paſſed betwixt miſs *Encrom* and *Alicia* during two years, I am afraid I ſhould draw this work out into too great a length. I ſhall therefore acquaint my reader that nothing material happened in that time, except miſs *Encrom*'s having received the addreſſes of lord *Dey*. His lordſhip's general good character, his natural and acquired accompliſhments, could not fail to gain the affections of a young lady, who wanted neither ſenſibility, nor diſcernment to ſee his merit. This courtſhip was the ſubject of many letters; and it gave *Alicia* the greateſt pleaſure to ſee the proſpect of her friend's happineſs. Every thing was agreed on betwixt the young pair, without having any doubt of obtaining the conſent of their parents, as indeed no reaſonable objection could be made againſt

againſt their marriage. But, as nothing is certain but the preſent moment, they, alas! ſoon found themſelves diſappointed.

Lord *Encrom*, who was intirely ruled by his wife, was informed by her ladyſhip, that an old rich widower, a relation of hers, had taken a fancy for miſs *Encrom*, and had propoſed ſettling his whole fortune on her, if ſhe would accept of him for a huſband, without aſking any thing with her in return. There needed no other argument to prevail with his lordſhip to give his conſent. Since his marriage with the preſent lady *Encrom*, his whole affection was placed on her ladyſhip, and his two ſons. Lord *Dey*'s circumſtances, while his father lived, could not admit of his marrying without a fortune; ſo that it was not in his lordſhip's power, conſiſtently with common prudence, to make the

the ſame offer. 'Tis eaſy to imagine the diſtreſs of the lovers on this occaſion; nor is it neceſſary to prolong the hiſtory, by preſenting my reader with the particulars. Let it ſuffice to ſay, miſs *Encrom* would not be prevailed on to marry the old gentleman, but continued privately to keep up a correſpondence with lord *Dey*, whoſe love was far from being leſſened by the difficulties, which came in the way. His lordſhip knew very well it would be in vain to attempt getting his father's conſent: ſo he wiſely reſolved to wait the earl's death, which, in all probability, could be at no great diſtance. Miſs *Encrom*'s obſtinacy (as her mother-in-law termed it) in refuſing the old gentleman occaſioned her leading a very uneaſy life, which nothing but the firm dependence ſhe had on lord *Dey*'s conſtancy could have enabled her to bear with tole-

rable

rable patience. Things being in this ſituation with regard to miſs *Encrom*, I will now preſent my reader with ſuch of the letters, which paſſed betwixt her and miſs *Montague*, as may be neceſſary to carry on the hiſtory.

Miſs MONTAGUE *to the Honourable Miſs* ENCROM.

My dear *Caroline*,

I'VE got into quite a ſerious humour, nor could you, for your life, gueſs the ſubject of my contemplation. Something very ſublime, you'll no doubt think, or of great importance to myſelf or friends. Neither, my dear, I give you my word. In ſhort, I am ſeriouſly conſidering, whether or not I can find any thing to

amuſe you, which I have not repeated to you five hundred times. My grateful ſenſe of the obligations I lye under to my dear *Sophy*, the generoſity of the good admiral, and the continuance of the kindneſs of my aunts, which you ſo much doubted; theſe, tho' they can never fail giving me pleaſure to repeat them, I begin to think, tho' you have too much complaiſance to tell me ſo, you are certainly by this time tired of. The deſcription of our theatrical performances I have wore out. Vauxhall, Ranelagh, with the ceremony of the drawing-room, routs, drums, and all the other elegant entertainments of life, I have already exhauſted. Nothing of all this can I repeat: then what, my dear, to you can be ſo agreeable, as for me to continue to admire your patience, and to tell you that I'm convinced you will ſoon be rewarded? Your

father

father does not want ſenſe, and tho' he is blinded by his fondneſs for lady *Encrom*, he will certainly, in ſome lucky moment, ſee his error, and make up matters with the old earl.

Since I wrote you laſt, we have had a continual round of diverſions. Yet *Sophy* and I cannot help preferring your confinement, with the proſpect of being united to ſuch a partner as lord *Dey*, to all the variety of pleaſures we enjoy. His lordſhip's taſte for the country muſt be a delightful circumſtance to one, who has refined notions of love and matrimony. Miſs *Oſmond* declares ſhe is never to marry, unleſs ſhe meets with a man as unexceptionable as his lordſhip: ſo you ſee, my dear, how we envy your happineſs. Adieu.

Miſs MONTAGUE *to the Honourable Miſs* ENCROM.

I Was obliged, my dear *Caroline*, to end my laſt a little abruptly, and I'm now ſet down to give you my reaſon for doing ſo. You muſt know lady *Ann Egerton* is going to be married to the young earl of *Belvedere*. Lady *Ann*'s intimacy with miſs *Oſmond*, you'll have heard, commenced firſt when *Sophy* came to *London*, and has continued ever ſince. As I was writing to you on my uſual day, *Sophy* received a card from her ladyſhip, deſiring the favour of her and me to come to her immediately, having ſomething very agreeable to impart, and not having it in her power to wait on us. *Sophy* was quite impatient, and would not give me time to make an apology to you, but

but hurried me away to the earl's. We found her ladyſhip alone. After augmenting our curioſity a little, ſhe informed us, that the earl of *Belvedere* had told her, that miſs *Oſmond* and miſs *Montague* had each made a conqueſt at the laſt ſubſcription-ball: *Sophy*, of 'ſquire *Talbot*; and my ladyſhip, of Sir *Harry Pembroke*. She then confeſſed, that her principal reaſon for ſending for us, was to have our opinion of ſome ſilks and laces ſhe had deſired to be brought her that morning, for the approaching occaſion.

We had juſt finiſhed this important affair, when the earl of *Belvedere*, and the two above mentioned gentlemen, came in. After chatting a little on different ſubjects, the earl propoſed our going next day to *Windſor*, which was no ſooner mentioned than agreed on. As you have, without doubt,

doubt, heard a deſcription of that delightful place, I ſhall not leſſen your idea of it by attempting to deſcribe it. I ſhall only tell you in general, that I was perfectly charmed with every thing I ſaw; the muſick of the feathred ſongſters delighted my ear; and that I left this earthly paradiſe with regret. My new admirer is extremely handſome, ſenſible, and polite; 'ſquire *Talbot* a comical merry companion. The earl and lady *Ann*, as far as I can judge, will make quite a faſhionable pair: little or no love on either ſide, and equally, I believe, unſuſceptible of ſoft impreſſions. However, all parties are pleaſed, and that, in the general opinion of the gay world, is enough. If it were not thought ſo, matrimony would be out of faſhion. The little gentleman, *Cupid*, ſeldom frequents the aſſemblies of the great; and when he

he does pay them a viſit, if his arrows are not tipt with gold, *Plutus* preſents a charm, which cures the wound in a twinkling. As I only intend this for an apology for the ſhortneſs of my laſt, I will conclude with offering my reſpects to lord *Dey*, and wiſhing you health, wealth, and a huſband.

I remain yours to command,

A. MONTAGUE.

Several letters are here omitted.

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Miſs MONTAGUE *to the Honourable Miſs* ENCROM.

I CAN no longer, my dear *Caroline*, conceal from you my preſent uneaſineſs. Knowing your ge-

nerous ſympathizing temper, I would have delayed acquainting you with the cauſe, till I ſaw if it could be removed. But as you are ſo anxious to know the reaſon of *Sophy*'s not anſwering your letters, and have beſides remarked the unuſual ſtile of mine, I ſhould deſervedly forfeit your friendſhip, were I to remain ſilent on a ſubject, with which, I confeſs to you, my heart is not a little oppreſſed.

You'll remember ſome time ago, I mentioned in one of my letters, that lady *Anne Egerton*, now counteſs of *Belvedere*, had jocularly informed *Sophy* and me, of each of us having gained a new admirer. Sir *Harry Pembroke*, who was ſaid to be mine, in a few days after our jaunt to *Windſor*, made ſeriouſly his addreſſes to miſs *Oſmond*. I rallied her with my uſual freedom and gaiety, for robbing

bing me of a conqueſt, with which I had been ſo pleaſed. She failed not to give me a return in kind. You know how many men of rank and fortune miſs *Oſmond* has rejected; and I was extremely glad to find, by her favourable opinion of Sir *Harry*, that he was likely to gain the prize. Accordingly, in a few weeks, as I had ſuppoſed, he obtained her conſent to apply to the admiral, who received him with great joy, and declared, he did not know a man he would like better for his ſon-in law; and was extremely happy, that *Sophy* was at laſt inclined to matrimony.

In ſhort, every thing was going on to our wiſh, and ſhe had allowed me to inform you of it, when all of a ſudden, ſhe turned melancholy. In particular, when alone with me, ſhe ſcarce ever opened her lips. I, at firſt, begged to know if ſhe was

well, or if ſhe had met with any thing which made her uneaſy. She made me no anſwer; but, with a heavy ſigh, retired to her own apartment. You may eaſily imagine, my dear *Caroline*, how this affected me; I burſt into tears, and following her, begged and prayed her to tell me what was the matter; but all in vain.

Several days paſſed, in which Sir *Harry* paid his viſits as uſual, and *Sophy* behaved in ſuch a manner, that no one, I believe, obſerved her change of temper but myſelf.

We were both invited to a ball, given by the earl of *Belvedere* after his marriage. I was ſurpriſed when ſhe accepted the invitation, as I never doubted but ſhe would feign an excuſe for not going. The pain, which I felt at my heart, would have kept me at home; but I thought,

by ſitting alone, it would rather increaſe than diminiſh: I therefore accepted likewiſe of the invitation. Sir *Harry* engaged me for his partner, and *Sophy* was engaged by lord *Chathamley*, a couſin of Sir *Harry*'s. We had not been two hours at the ball, when *Sophy* complained of being faint, and was obliged to retire to another apartment. She ſoon turned better, but would not be prevailed on to return to the ball-room. Lady *Belvedere* was afraid to preſs her: ſo, after acquainting lord *Chathamley* and Sir *Harry*, who handed us to our chairs, expreſſing their concern, the latter declaring he would follow us directly, we went home.

You may believe the admiral was not a little alarmed, when he ſaw us return, and heard the occaſion. He propoſed immediately ſending for doctor *R*—; but this *Sophy* would not

allow, declaring ſhe found herſelf perfectly well again, only inclined to reſt. The admiral and Sir *Harry* endeavoured to perſuade her, ſince ſhe found herſelf eaſy, not to leave them ſo ſoon; but that, ſince we had been deprived of the pleaſure of dancing at the ball, we ſhould join in concert, and chear them after their fright with a ſong. But this ſhe was not, ſhe ſaid, in ſpirits to conſent to: ſo, after wiſhing them a good night, I went up with her to her chamber, where I offered to aſſiſt her to undreſs, her maid not being in the houſe.

But, Oh, my dear *Caroline*, how was I diſtreſt, when ſhe flung herſelf down in a chair, and burſt into tears! "Good God! ſaid I, my deareſt *So-*
"*phy*, what is the matter! you will
"break my heart, if you do not
"tell me what it is, that lies ſo heavy

" heavy on your mind. Sure, my " deareſt girl," continued I, " you " cannot doubt of my friendſhip. If " it is not in my power to remove " the cauſe of your grief, allow " me, at leaſt, to alleviate your pain, " by ſharing it with you." " No, " *Alicia*, replied ſhe," " you ſhall not " know the cauſe which makes me " unhappy. The ſecret, if poſſible, " ſhall, for ever, be locked in my " own breaſt: ſo aſk not again " what I'm reſolved not to diſcloſe." " Good heavens," ſaid I, " how un- " kind you are! my dear *Sophy*. " Could I have a thought, which I " would wiſh to conceal from you? " How unhappy muſt I be in this " dreadful uncertainty?" " Go," ſaid ſhe, " and leave me; and let " me ſee, by your concealing from " my father and Sir *Harry*, my pre- " ſent uneaſineſs, that you can keep

" a ſecret. Remember—, and ſhe " ſpoke in a commanding tone,—if " you let them know of my tears, " I will never ſee you more."

Oh! my dear *Caroline*, 'tis impoſble for me to expreſs in what way I was affected. Unaccuſtomed to be threatened, there was ſomething roſe in my breaſt, which I had never felt before. It was worſe than grief, and if it had not ſuddenly fallen down again, I could not long have bore the pain. I pitied her diſtreſs; yet could not think to urge her any further. I again offered to aſſiſt her to undreſs, which ſhe refuſed, deſiring me to ſend up her maid, when ſhe came home. What could I ſay more? Wiſhing her good reſt, I left her, my mind not more compoſed than her own.

I need not tell you what a night I paſſed. It is now three weeks, ſince

ſince this happened, during which time her melancholy has daily increaſed, though ſhe ſtill finds means, I think, to cover it from every one but myſelf. To me her diſpoſition is quite altered; and, beſides being often in tears when alone, I ſeldom ſpeak to her, but ſhe ſhews her diſpleaſure. What can I think! ſometimes I propoſe to myſelf telling her, that, ſince I find I have forfeited her friendſhip, and, as it would ſeem, her good opinion, I can no longer be tolerably eaſy in her company: but I no ſooner think on this, but my tenderneſs for her returns. I conſider with myſelf, that to every other perſon ſhe is under reſtraint, and to me, who knows ſhe is unhappy (though ignorant of the cauſe) ſhe gives vent to her chagrin; and ſhall not I bear with one who has laid me under ſo many obligations? It is im-

poſſible to gueſs what can be the meaning of her behaviour: yet who knows, my dear *Caroline*, but my perſevering with patience, may bring her to think I deſerve her confidence?

I have twice aſked if ſhe intended writing to you. The laſt time, ſhe anſwered ſhe was not in a diſpoſition to write, and bid me teaze her no more with aſking queſtions. Sir *Harry* continues his viſits; but there are no preparatious going forwards for a wedding; and I know no more of it than what I've told you. You have now, my dear *Caroline*, the reaſon of my dull epiſtles. God grant a ſudden alteration. I will write to you ſoon, and let you know if there is any. Do you, my dear, give me your opinion how you think I ought to behave. Wiſhing you health and hap-

happineſs, I conclude this melancholy epiſtle, and am, my dear *Caroline*,

Yours, &c.

A. MONTAGUE.

Miſs MONTAGUE *to the Honourable Miſs* ENCROM.

HOW will you be ſurpriſed, my dear *Caroline*, when I tell you, I have left miſs *Oſmond!* On *Thurſday* laſt Sir *Harry Pembroke* having payed her a morning viſit as uſual, I happened to be ſitting in the parlour alone, when he came down ſtairs. Looking in, as if by accident, and ſeeing me, he came forward. You are always at work, ſaid he, miſs *Montague*; and taking hold of the ruffle I was flowering,

ſeemed to be obſerving the variety of ſtitches. "I ſuppoſe (ſaid I) Sir "*Harry*, you are no great connoiſſeur "in theſe things." "No, madam," replied he, "I cannot ſay I am; "but"—and he ſeemed to heſitate, when taking out a letter he preſented it to me, and begged the favour of my opinion of the contents. Surpriſed, tho' without gueſſing what it could mean, I was about to open it, when obſerving him going towards the door, "Stay," ſaid I, "Sir *Harry*, "you are not going before I give you "my opinion." It came ſuddenly in my mind it was verſes he had compoſed on *Sophy*; and I was uneaſy at myſelf for taking them ſo awkwardly. He made no reply, but haſtily went out, and left me to peruſe it at leiſure. This, you may believe, renewed my ſurprize; and I haſted up to my dreſſing-room, where ſhutting myſelf

myſelf in, I opened the letter, and found the contents as follows:

"Madam,

"WITH what dread muſt one, "who is ſenſible of having "acted contrary to the dictates of "honour, confeſs his folly to her, "whoſe good opinion he values more "than life, and whoſe diſpleaſure "he looks on as the greateſt evil "that can befall him! ſuch, ma-"dam, is my preſent ſituation. Un-"able to ſtruggle any longer with "my pain, I have at laſt come to "a reſolution to lay open my heart, "and to know my fate from you, "on whoſe forgiveneſs and favour "depends the future happineſs of "my life. In what words, dear "madam, ſhall I confeſs my ſhame "at having endeavoured to ſtifle "the nobleſt paſſion of the ſoul,

"and

" and not only given myſelf up a
" votary to ambition, but ungene-
" rouſly made my addreſſes to a
" young lady, whoſe merit I am not
" blind to, but whoſe charms have
" not had power to touch my heart.
" Oh, deareſt madam! were it poſ-
" ſible for you to conceive the pain I
" feel, your tender nature would
" certainly induce you to think my
" ſufferings, tho' juſt, deſerve your
" compaſſion. The firſt time I had
" the pleaſure of ſeeing you, I was
" ſtruck with your beauty; but
" following the cuſtom of the world,
" to which I was a ſlave, I conſidered
" matrimony as a pill, which, if not
" gilded, it was impoſſible I could
" ſwallow. Your friend, I was in-
" formed, had a fortune ſo conſider-
" able, that the firſt gentlemen in
" the kingdom had made their ad-
" dreſſes to her. Love, which had

" only

" only ſkimmed the ſurface of my
" heart, eaſily gave way; and ac-
" tuated, as I thought, by the ſpi-
" rit of a fine gentleman, I reſolved
" to endeavour to gain the prize,
" which ſo many had attempted in
" vain.

" The ſeeming ſincerity of a paſ-
" ſion I only feigned, too ſoon
" gained the heart of your friend;
" while I, by every day viewing your
" ſuperior charms, became a willing
" convert to the power of beauty.
" Love no ſooner took full poſſeſſion
" of my ſoul, than every ignoble paſ-
" ſion gave way to its all-powerful
" influence; and I ſaw, tho' too
" late, the baſeneſs of my intention
" of robbing a lady of her liberty
" and fortune, without thinking it
" neceſſary to give her a heart in re-
" turn. Reſolved to ſhew my change
" of ſentiment, yet to ſave the young

" lady's delicacy, I determined, by " the coolneſs of my behaviour, to " make her change hers in my fa- " vour. But ſhe, not ſuſpecting my " deſign, took no notice of the al- " teration. My next hope proceeded " from the poſſibility of the admiral " refuſing his conſent: to induce him " to do ſo, I concealed one half the " value of my fortune; but equally " in vain. Happy at the thought " of ſeeing his daughter ſettled, and " having a reſpect for my family, " he frankly gave his conſent. Dif- " appointed on every hand, I was " ſcarce able to behave with tolera- " ble politeneſs.

" I have continued my viſits ever " ſince, and have, by various pre- " tences, delayed the marriage. " Sure miſs *Oſmond* muſt have ſeen " my diſtreſs, and perhaps has made " her complaint to her friend. You

" are

" are now, madam, miſtreſs of the
" ſecret, and on your forgiveneſs
" depends all my earthly happineſs.
" With what rapture could I ex-
" preſs myſelf at the bare poſſibility
" of your being mine! But, Oh,
" madam, a juſt ſenſe of my paſt
" errors ſhrinks me into nothing;
" and my whole frame trembles,
" while I preſume to aſk you the
" moſt prudent method to undeceive
" miſs *Oſmond.* If your generoſity
" can extend farther; if, by the
" moſt diſtant glimmering of hope,
" you raiſe my depreſſed ſpirits;
" how will my heart overflow with
" gratitude! how will I bleſs the
" moment I was firſt ſenſible of
" your charms! and, under their
" influence, ſquare my future con-
" duct. With how much impa-
" tience ſhall I wait a return! What-

" ever

" ever be my fate, I can never ceaſe
" to be, deareſt madam,

" Your paſſionate admirer."

Think, my dear *Caroline*, what I felt at reading this ſurpriſing epiſtle. Good God, ſaid I to myſelf, how wayward is the heart of man! not content with the unmerited favours providence lays within his reach, he wildly rejects them, and endeavours to graſp at impoſſibilities. What a vile creature would your *Alicia* be, were ſhe capable to heſitate a moment in rejecting a heart, which another has a right to; and how ſtill more vile, when that other is her deareſt friend, who has loaded her with favours. But, my dear *Caroline*, when I conſidered on the other hand, how undeſerving Sir *Harry Pembroke* is of our dear *Sophy* by his own

own confeſſion, how was my judgment ſtaggered in what way I ſhould act? I mean, whether I ſhould not, as Sir *Harry* had deſired me, take the moſt prudent method to acquaint her, and truſt to her finding ſpirit to conquer ſo ill placed an affection; or whether I ſhould conceal what had happened, and endeavour to awaken in Sir *Harry* a juſt ſenſe of his unaccountable folly, and at the ſame time make him ſenſible of his ingratitude to miſs *Oſmond*, who has placed her affections on him, in preference to ſo many others of ſuperior rank and fortune.

After weighing both in my own mind, I fixed on the latter. I conſidered, by the firſt, I endangered her health; and, probably, by ſhewing her ſhe was ſo ill uſed by the only man ſhe ever ſeemed to favour, would make her determine to live

live ſingle for life. This would be very ſevere on the good admiral, who, you would think, had renewed his youth, at the proſpect of ſeeing his dear *Sophy* ſettled ſo much to his wiſh. But even ſuppoſing this not to be the caſe (though I look on it as the moſt probable), her fortune is known to be ſo conſiderable, that it draws the attention of the ambitious; and ſo far from placing her merit in an advantageous light, puts it entirely out of the queſtion. On this account, ſhe would ſtill run the hazard of getting a huſband, as inſenſible of her value, as Sir *Harry Pembroke*; and, perhaps, by not having ſo much ſenſe, have a leſs chance of finding out her value afterwards. On this conſideration, I fixed my reſolution, and wrote Sir *Harry* the following letter.

" Sir,

" Sir,

" IT is impoſſible for me to ex-
" preſs what pain I feel from the
" contents of your letter. Your
" confeſſion of having made your
" addreſſes to miſs *Oſmond*, without
" having conſidered her merit, is,
" indeed, a fault, of which we have
" too many examples. One would
" imagine the general conſequence
" of inconſiderate marriages would
" prevent them; but ſuch is the
" nature of every bad cuſtom, that
" many are convinced, yet few are
" converted. But at the ſame time
" we obſerve the general conſequence
" of error, we may ſee likewiſe, that
" providence does not always puniſh
" us as we deſerve; but, on the
" contrary, beſtows on us bleſſings
" unlooked for. Such, in all pro-
" bability, will be the caſe in your
marriage

" marriage with miſs *Oſmond.* The
" many amiable qualifications of the
" young lady, with the ſincere love
" and eſteem ſhe has for you, of
" which ſhe has given an undoubted
" proof by preferring you to ſo
" many others, muſt awaken in your
" breaſt a juſt ſenſe of them, and,
" conſequently, lay a proper and
" ſolid foundation for love and con-
" ſtancy. How far different would
" the caſe be, were I to favour your
" preſent wiſhes? how ſhort and
" tranſient would the continuance of
" your love be, which cannot be
" returned without deſervedly for-
" feiting your eſteem?

" You are, perhaps, ignorant of
" the obligations I am under to miſs
" *Oſmond.* I need only ſay, they are
" ſuch, that, ſhould I accept of a
" heart ſhe has an undoubted right
" to, which of itſelf would be de-

teſtable,

" teſtable, I ſhould likewiſe be guilty
" of the blackeſt ingratitude. You
" are certainly miſtaken, when you
" think the love you profeſs is true
" and genuine. It muſt only be the
" child of wayward fancy, which
" miſleads the thoughtleſs and giddy
" from one object to another. Par-
" don me, dear Sir, for expreſſing
" myſelf ſo freely; and be thankful
" you are not puniſhed, as many
" are, by the attainment of their
" wiſhes. Before you receive this,
" I ſhall be gone from admiral *Oſ-*
" *mond*'s. It ſhall be my care to
" avoid giving *Sophy* the ſmalleſt
" grounds to ſuſpect the reaſon of
" my leaving her. Your behaviour,
" which you own has been incon-
" ſiſtent, undoubtedly has given her
" pain. I have, indeed, obſerved
" her uneaſineſs, but never could have
" gueſſed the cauſe; and perhaps,

endeavour-

" endeavouring not to give way to " ſuſpicion, ſhe thought not of en- " truſting her friend with the ſe- " cret! Do you, Sir *Harry*, change " your behaviour, and you will ſoon " obſerve beauties in miſs *Oſmond*, " which, on your account, have, in " ſome meaſure, been overſhadowed " with a cloud.

" Love, when entirely the effect " of fancy, is productive of as few " happy marriages, as thoſe which " are made from intereſt or ambi- " tion. A too ſtrong admiration of " the charms of the perſon we are " joined to, is equally dangerous " with indifference, and when we " look around us, we will ſee, ſel- " dom produces above one honey- " moon. The other paſſions, which " you ſay give way to all conquer- " ing love, ſoon diſdain ſo violent " a maſter. Remorſe, envy, and

" diſap-

" diſappointed ambition, pull her
" down by turns; and, when not
" checked by reaſon, which comes
" not unſollicited, make a dreadful
" havock in the human breaſt. And
" after all, dear Sir, I beg you will
" ſeriouſly conſider, that, if you
" find diſappointment in love ſo hard
" to bear, what muſt the delicate
" frame of miſs *Oſmond* ſuffer, who
" has beſtowed her heart on you,
" and has accuſtomed herſelf to look
" on you as one, who will be her
" faithful partner; who will leſſen
" all her cares, and heighten every
" pleaſure? Her fortune, viewing it
" in a juſt light, is without doubt
" a conſiderable advantage; and I
" hope, from the joint inclination of
" both, will contribute to your hap-
" pineſs. I am perſuaded I have
" ſaid more than what is neceſſary
" to convince you, how much you

" have erred, and, at the ſame time,
" how eaſy you will find it to re-
" turn into the right path. If temp-
" tations did not ſome time fall in
" our way, we ſhould want the me-
" rit of reſiſting them. Without
" adding any thing farther than my
" warmeſt wiſhes for the happineſs
" of you and miſs *Oſmond*, I am, &c."

And now, my dear *Caroline*, I hope, you will not diſapprove of what I have done. Without baniſhing myſelf from miſs *Oſmond*, and in conſequence from the ſight of Sir *Harry Pembroke*, I cannot think I ſhould have done my duty: I therefore, before I ſent the above letter, wrote one to be left for *Sophy*. As I did not take a copy of it, I cannot give you the contents exactly. I was obliged to take the advantage of her behaviour to me for ſome time

time paſt, and gave that as my reaſon for leaving her. I endeavoured to write in as cool a ſtrain as poſſible, chuſing to be thought ungrateful, rather than run the hazard of her aſking me to return. I deſired her to make my acknowledgments to the admiral for his unbounded generoſity, and to deliver him a fifty pound note, which he had given me by her a few weeks before. I concluded with wiſhing her happineſs; and that ſhe might find a friend ſhe could truſt, and who would be able to leſſen her cares.

Oh, *Caroline*, how did my heart bleed! and ſtill continues to bleed! There is ſomething in my having left her, which makes it appear to me worſe than if I had loſt her by death. How can I think of being ſo near her, to hazard ſeeing her by accident, and dare not look nor ſpeak the ſen-

timents of my heart! Ah, *Caroline*, my reſolution almoſt fails me, and I could wiſh Sir *Harry* may not follow my advice. Should he not, having done what I think my duty, I would return to my dear *Sophy*, exclaim againſt him, and tell her all. Surely I again ſhould obtain her friendſhip. But how little and ſelfiſh is this wiſh! alas! *Caroline* how imperfect are my beſt performances!

But to return, after getting every thing prepared, and my cloaths packed up, which I did with the utmoſt expedition, that I might avoid ſeeing Sir *Harry*, I took the firſt opportunity of *Sophy* being retired to her apartment, and the admiral gone out, of ſending for a hackney coach. When it came, I deſired miſs *Oſmond*'s ſervant, which I believe not a little ſurpriſed him, to aſſiſt the coachman in putting in my baggage, and endea-

endeavouring to cover my confuſion, haſtily ſtept into the coach: then giving *Thomas* my letter to his miſtreſs, I deſired the coachman to drive to —— ſtreet in the city. He no ſooner drove away, than I gave vent to my tears, which, in ſome meaſure, relieved me. When I got to —— ſtreet, I deſired the coachman to enquire if there were any lodgings to let; which he did, and, in a few minutes, brought me word of ſeveral. I fixed on the firſt I went to, at one Mrs. *Conyer*'s, a widow gentlewoman, who keeps a grocery-ſhop. I have a neat but ſmall firſt floor, for which I pay ten ſhillings a week: rather too much for my circumſtances; but I had not ſpirits to look about; and as I hope I ſhall not have occaſion to keep it long, it ſignifies the leſs. I have wrote to both my aunts; but, you may believe, with-

out letting them know my reaſon for leaving miſs *Oſmond*. I only ſay, a miſunderſtanding having ariſen betwixt us, I had reſolved to do what they before approved of, and hoped they would be as good as they had been formerly, in endeavouring to recommend me to a right family, which I could wiſh were any where rather than in *London*. This laſt part of my requeſt was, in a great meaſure, owing to a falſe ſhame, which, I confeſs, I ought rather to be aſhamed of. My letter to Sir *Harry* I have put into the Poſt-office, thinking that the ſafeſt method. And now, my dear, do I wait here with impatience, till I hear from my aunts, as alſo from you, whoſe opinion of my conduct, you may believe, I am anxious to know. God grant that the event may juſtify what I have done! that I may behave in my new ſtation, ſo as to be approved of by thoſe

thoſe above me; and more particularly, that I may always merit the approbation of my own heart. That every thing good may attend my dear *Caroline* and lord *Dey*, is the ſincere wiſh of your ever affectionate friend,

A. MONTAGUE.

To give my readers as diſtinct an account as poſſible, I will now acquaint them how the above letters were received. I ſhall begin with miſs *Oſmond*, who, as ſoon as miſs *Montague* drove away, received her letter from *Thomas*. But firſt I ought to inform them of what, perhaps, they have already gueſſed, that the reaſon why miſs *Oſmond* was ſo ſhy to her friend, was, that ſhe was jealous of Sir *Harry*'s love, which ſhe could eaſily enough ſee was beſtowed on miſs *Montague*; the conſequence of which

was her wiſhing for nothing more than *Alicia*'s leaving the houſe. She therefore received that kind of pleaſure on reading her letter, which one generally feels on a wiſh ſucceeding, which they do not know rightly how to approve of. Thus, like *Aaron*'s rod, had love ſwallowed up every other conſideration but what tended to gratify that paſſion; and reduced the once generous and friendly miſs *Oſmond*, to what, two months before, ſhe would have thought impoſſible.

After ruminating in her mind how to acquaint her father, ſhe, at laſt, reſolved to ſhew him *Alicia*'s letter, and, at the ſame time, to deny her having given her any cauſe for going away; alledging, ſhe had certainly ſome ſecret reaſon, which ſhe had not given in her letter, and which ſhe could not poſſibly gueſs.

The

The good admiral believed his daughter; and, as he had never heard of her behaving ill to any one, could not imagine ſhe would do ſo to miſs *Montague*, for whom ſhe had ſo great a regard. He therefore began to comfort *Sophy*, and leſt ſhe had forgot, put her in mind, that ſhe was about to get a companion for life, that would make up for the loſs of her female friend. "Why has the "fooliſh girl, ſaid he, left the fifty "pound note? Does ſhe think I "would have grudged her that "trifle becauſe ſhe has left us? I "wiſh, *Sophy*, ſhe may not be ſtraiten-"ed enough yet for half the ſum. "But, my good girl" continued he, "if you can learn where ſhe has gone "to, ſend it to her, and let her know "that I never take back what I have "once given; and that ſince ſhe "thinks ſhe can be happier elſe-

" where than in my family, ſhe was " certainly in the right to leave it; " only I think ſhe ought to have given " a more feaſible reaſon for her doing " ſo, than accuſing you of a thing, " of which I know it is not in your " nature to be guilty." A conſcious bluſh overſpread the face of *Sophy*, which her good parent did not obſerve. She retired to her chamber, where how Sir *Harry* would behave on hearing that *Alicia* had left the houſe, immediately took up her thoughts. She endeavoured to arm herſelf with fortitude on ſeeing the confuſion ſhe expected he would be in; and flattered herſelf that if ſhe was able to practiſe the virtue of patience, all might yet be well.

As the hour approached when ſhe expected Sir *Harry*, her fear of wanting reſolution increaſed the probability of her not finding it. As the

the time paſſed away, without his making his appearance, a freſh uneaſineſs began to ſpring up in her mind. " Can it be poſſible," ſaid ſhe to herſelf, " that *Alicia* and Sir " *Harry* are together? Good God! " why am I thus tormented! Let " me recollect every circumſtance of " their behaviour, before I give way " to a ſuſpicion, which, if I find " reaſon for it, will certainly diſtract " me. That Sir *Harry* is in love " with *Alicia*, his attention whenever ſhe begins to ſpeak, his frequent ſighs when looking at her, " his thoughfulneſs when alone with " me, with the frivolous excuſes he " has made for delaying our marriage, together with what lady " *Belvedere* ſaid of his admiration " of her, when he firſt ſaw us both, " ſufficiently confirm—But, from " my moſt narrow obſervation, could

" I ever ſee the leaſt reaſon for ſup-
" poſing that *Alicia* was ſenſible of
" his love for her? The ſame
" graceful and eaſy manner, for
" which ſhe is ſo much admired,
" could not have continued, had
" that been the caſe, in a heart
" unaccuſtomed to deceit. Could
" ſhe, whoſe ſentiments I know are
" refined, whoſe conduct, ſince her
" moſt early years, has correſponded
" with the innocence of her conver-
" ſation? could ſhe, with her uſual
" ſweetneſs of temper, give her opi-
" nion of Sir *Harry Pembroke*, and,
" when I gave her the leaſt oppor-
" tunity, endeavour to chear up my
" ſpirits, by repreſenting how hap-
" py I ſhould be with ſuch a com-
" panion? could ſhe, at the ſame
" time, be carrying on a ſcheme
" to deprive me of all earthly hap-
" pineſs? No: 'tis impoſſible. How

" ought

" ought I to hate myſelf for ſuch a
" thought? Alas! when I conſider
" my own conduct, it has certainly
" been ungenerous. Had I not bet-
" ter have confeſſed my ſuſpicion to
" *Alicia*, and truſted to her friendſhip.
" Perhaps, by my deſire, ſhe would
" have abſented herſelf for ſome
" time; and, as Sir *Harry* has, un-
" doubtedly, been endeavouring to
" conquer his paſſion, he might have
" ſucceeded, without my forfeiting
" that ſelf-approbation, in the en-
" joyment of which, I have, till of
" late, been happy. Let me con-
" ſider. Is there not a poſſibility I
" may yet find her? Cannot *Thomas*
" find out the coachman? Certain-
" ly. I will immediately write to
" her, or rather, I will go to her,
" and pour out my whole heart,
" which, from a falſe delicacy and
" pride, I have concealed. From

" her

" her goodneſs, I may expect pity
" and forgiveneſs. Pity! oh, I
" cannot bear the thought! yet ſhe
" muſt have pitied me already. I
" ſhall certainly go, whatever be
" the conſequence."

She immediately rung the bell, when, her maid appearing, ſhe deſired her to bring her ſome lavender to revive her ſpirits. While *Betty* was dropping them on ſugar, regretting her miſtreſs's indiſpoſition, ſhe deſired her to ſend *Thomas* for the ſame coach that *Alicia* had gone away in. *Betty*, who did not want penetration, had ſeen there was ſomething going on, which gave her miſtreſs uneaſineſs. She, having paſſed the parlour door, when Sir *Harry* gave *Alicia* the letter, thought nothing of it at the time; but on hearing that miſs *Montague* had gone out in a hackney-coach, and had taken all

all her cloaths with her, ſhe began to form not very favourable conjectures. Seeing her miſtreſs ſo ill, and deſiring the ſame coach to be ſent for, ſhe thought her ſuſpicions confirmed, though ſhe could not be certain of particulars. Not wanting in female curioſity, and wiſhing to be entruſted with her miſtreſs's ſecrets—"Pray, madam," ſaid ſhe, "is not miſs *Montague* going into "the country, that ſhe has taken "all her cloaths with her?" "For "ſome little time," returned *Sophia*; "but having forgot ſomething, which "I intended to ſay to her, I want to "ſee her. As I was ſick when ſhe "went away, I did not aſk where "ſhe intended going to-night; but I "don't think ſhe would go far in "a hackney-coach. But if *Thomas* "can get the coachman, I ſhall "know where he ſet her down."

"True,

"True, madam," ſaid *Betty*, as ſhe was adjuſting the toilette, "I ſhall "deſire *Thomas* to go immediately. "But pray, madam, does not Sir "*Harry Pembroke* go to eſcort miſs "*Montague* to the country? Sure "ſhe will not go alone." Sharp as an arrow did the words of Mrs. *Betty* pierce the heart of poor *Sophia*, and ſhe ſunk back in her chair, unable to aſk any queſtions, either to remove, or confirm her ſuſpicions. By the care of Mrs. *Betty*, ſhe ſoon was able, in broken ſentences, to ſpeak to the following purpoſe.

"I am very ſenſible, *Betty*, you "have a kind and ſympathizing heart; "and that you have a true reſpect "and regard for your miſtreſs, is "what I have no reaſon to doubt." "God forbid, madam," returned *Betty*, "that I ſhould ever give you "reaſon to be of a contrary opi-

"nion.

" nion. Sure I ſhould be the worſt
" creature in the world, were I other-
" wiſe to ſo good a young lady."
" Indeed, *Betty*, I believe you love
" me, and by what you have ſaid,
" I am perſuaded you know of my
" being very ill uſed, where I ought
" leaſt to have expected it. Tell
" me, my good girl, all you know.
" Perhaps I ſhall be eaſier, when
" I've heard the worſt." " I de-
" clare, madam," replied *Betty*, " I
" am quite ignorant of what you
" ſeem to ſuppoſe. I confeſs, I this
" day began to ſuſpect, from a tri-
" fling circumſtance, which I ob-
" ſerved on *Wedneſday*, though I
" took little notice of it at the
" time. But miſs *Montague*'s leav-
" ing the houſe ſo abruptly, with-
" out my hearing any thing of it,
" or being deſired to aſſiſt her in
" packing, made me recollect it,
" and

" and I own it has awakened my " ſuſpicion." " What, what was " it? *Betty*, pray tell me. Oh, my " poor heart!" " Indeed, madam, " it gives me pain to ſee you ſo " uneaſy; but I ſhall tell you all." She here gave an account of the before-mentioned circumſtance of the letter, adding at the ſame time, " that " miſs *Montague* went immediately " up to her chamber, and continued " a conſiderable time there alone." " My God!" ſaid *Sophia*; " can it be " poſſible? Oh! *Betty*, I am miſera- " ble. You have ſeen enough; my " ſuſpicions are confirmed beyond a " doubt; they are certainly gone to- " gether. Good God! how unworthily " have I beſtowed my love and friend- " ſhip."

The agony, which miſs *Oſmond* continued in all night, made *Betty*, who really loved her miſtreſs, ter-

ribly

ribly alarmed. The admiral did not come home till it was too late to enquire for his daughter. In the morning, *Betty* went down, and informed him, "that miſs *Oſmond* having reſted very ill all night, and being now aſleep, ſhe did not care to wake her to breakfaſt." "By no means," ſaid the admiral. "I really think *Sophy* has been looking ill of late." A gentleman coming in, prevented him from ſaying any thing further; and *Betty* haſted up to her miſtreſs, whom ſhe found ſomewhat relieved by a flood of tears, which had ſeaſonably come to her relief. She was going on with very natural reflections againſt *Alicia* and Sir *Harry*, which ſhe could not ſuppreſs, when *Thomas*, after tapping gently at the door, delivered to Mrs. *Betty* a letter for miſs *Oſmond*, which he ſaid was brought by Sir *Harry Pembroke*'s ſervant.

vant. Though *Sophia* imagined ſhe was fully convinced before of her ill fate, yet the ſight of the letter threw her into a freſh agony. When her trembling hand had half tore the paper in breaking the ſeal, ſhe read it over without knowing what it contained, till the word admirer, at the concluſion, like a loadſtone, drew her attention, and made her read it again more compoſedly. The contents were as follow:

" Madam,

" AN unexpected affair obliging " me to go to the country for " a few days, I hope your good- " neſs will pardon my not perſon- " ally acquainting you with it, the " hurry I am in putting it out of my " power. In ten days at furtheſt " you may expect to ſee me, or elſe to " receive a full account of the reaſon

" of

" of my delay. My beſt reſpects " wait on the admiral, and I am, " madam, with the utmoſt eſteem,

" Your ſincere admirer,

" H. Pembroke."

" Good heavens! *Betty*, what can " be the meaning of this—read it, " and give me your opinion. You " now know every thought of my " heart. I will continue to let you " know every thing, as I am con- " vinced you will not make a bad " uſe of the confidence I put in " you." *Betty*, having made a proper return for her miſtreſs's good opinion of her, read the letter. " Indeed, madam," ſaid ſhe, returning it, " I don't know what to " think; I am ſure in this world " people cannot judge by appear- " ances. A more modeſt, ſweet look-

" looking young lady, than miſs " *Montague*, I never ſaw; and yet " it appears to me by this letter, " that ſhe has not gone off in an " honourable way with Sir *Harry*; " I mean he has no intention to " marry her; for, tho' he had, their " doing ſo in the way they have " taken, would be very little to the " honour of either." " What!" ſaid *Sophia*, " do you imagine, that " *Alicia* has gone away with Sir " *Harry*, with any other view than " marriage? No; that is impoſſible: " yet this letter I cannot compre- " hend. What end can Sir *Harry* " propoſe by continuing to deceive " me?"

" You'll pardon me, madam," ſaid *Betty*; " but indeed it appears " to me, that Sir *Harry* has got " miſs *Montague* for his miſtreſs, and " ſtill wiſhes to have you for his

" wife. What elſe can be the mean-
" ing of his writing this letter?"
" Oh, *Betty*," ſaid *Sophia*, " I am
" at a loſs what to think. Sure Sir
" *Harry* can never imagine, what-
" ever pain it may coſt me to for-
" get him, that I will marry him,
" and know of his having a miſ-
" treſs." " I don't imagine, ma-
" dam," returned *Betty*, " he in-
" tends you ſhould know of his
" having one. But I am afraid,
" were you to wait till a man of
" faſhion pays his addreſſes to you,
" who does not keep a miſtreſs, you
" would remain ſingle for life."
" You muſt have a very bad opi-
" nion of the men of faſhion," ſaid *Sophia*, " and were what you ſay
" true, I ſhould wiſh for ever to
" continue ſingle."

The converſation laſted, betwixt miſs *Oſmond* and her maid, till the im-

impreſſion of *Alicia* being Sir *Harry*'s miſtreſs was deeply engraven on poor *Sophia*'s mind. She therefore reſolved to tear his image for ever from her boſom; but, alas! her efforts were in vain. A quick ſucceſſion of fainting fits had almoſt put an end to her life. Phyſicians were immediately called, and the good admiral was in the utmoſt diſtreſs. *Betty*, who was the only one that knew the cauſe of her illneſs, was conſtantly in tears. Glad would ſhe have been, could ſhe have called back what ſhe had ſaid; but, that being impoſſible, ſhe prudently began to obſerve to her miſtreſs, that there was poſſibility ſhe had judged too raſhly: "And, madam," ſaid ſhe, "ſuppoſing I have not, you are certainly "wrong in giving up Sir *Harry*. "His many good qualities make him "worthy of your care to reclaim "him. The love he has for miſs

" *Montague* cannot be founded on
" eſteem; conſequently may not be
" difficult to root out. I beg, ma-
" dam, you will not thus torment
" yourſelf to no purpoſe, when, by
" exerting your good ſenſe and pru-
" dence, you may eſtabliſh Sir *Harry*'s
" love for you, and break an attach-
" ment, which, it would be next to
" a miracle, if it did not ſoon break
" of itſelf. But gratitude and an
" eſteem for you, which muſt ſoon
" take place in his heart, cannot
" fail, if you will allow yourſelf to
" try the experiment."

Sophia was but newly recovered out of a fainting fit, when Mrs. *Betty* began to give the above advice. The reſolution of never ſeeing Sir *Harry*, had not only affected her health, but likewiſe over-powered her reaſon, ſo far as to prevent her being able to change her intentions of herſelf: but,

no ſooner had *Betty* pointed it out as a virtue to endeavour to reclaim him, than ſhe liſtened to her as to the voice of an angel; and found her advice of more effect, in raiſing her drooping ſpirits, than all the cordials that had been preſcribed. The phyſicians were amazed at finding her ſo much better on their next viſit, and now gave the admiral great hopes of her recovery.

Sophia's reaſon had been greatly weakened (before *Alicia* went away) by reſtraint. A delicacy, which may be eaſily accounted for, made her act contrary to the natural openneſs of her temper. Had not this been the caſe, ſhe would as ſoon have believed light was darkneſs, as believed miſs *Montague* capable of deceiving her; far leſs would ſhe ever have believed her to be the mean companion of a man of pleaſure. The mind, thus

diſtracted

diſtracted by warring paſſions, receives moſt unaccountable impreſſions, which are ſometimes ſo ſtrong, that nothing but ocular demonſtration can eradicate them, even when the mind becomes calm and ſerene. *Sophia* was convinced by Sir *Harry*'s letter to her, that he had no intention to marry *Alicia*. The circumſtance of his giving her a letter, the day before ſhe went away, ſeemed proof enough they were together. So taking the hint, which *Betty* had given her, of making a virtue of what her ſituation made her think a neceſſity, ſhe began to reaſon with herſelf, that it was the duty of a good wife to ſeem blind to her huſband's failings; and, by gentleneſs and good nature, engage his gratitude, and of conſequence, as *Betty*, had obſerved, love might follow. "'Tis true," ſaid ſhe to herſelf, "I am not married; ſo,

" no doubt, I am at liberty to draw " back; but ſince I find my affections " are already wedded, and that no ten- " der and affectionate wife could part " with her huſband with greater reluct- " ance, than I would with Sir *Harry*, " ſure it can be no crime in me to enter " into an engagement with him, that " will make it my duty to wean him " from vice." A moſt frightful under-taking would this have appeared about two months before; but when com-pared with the proſpect of parting with him for ever, the taſk ſeemed delightfully ſweet.

How far *Sophia*'s reaſoning was juſt (ſuppoſing the caſe to have been as ſhe firmly believed it) I ſhall not take upon me to ſay. With this re-ſolution I will leave her, and give ſome account of Sir *Harry*, who, on receiving miſs *Montague*'s letter, raved like a madman, curſed and bleſſed

all

all woman kind twenty times in a breath, and ſwore, if he could not marry miſs *Montague*, he would chain himſelf to no woman on earth. 'Tis an old obſervation, that nothing violent is of long continuance, the truth of which was at preſent confirmed. He grew calmer by degrees. The oftener he read *Alicia*'s letter, he ſaw the leſs reaſon to ſuppoſe ſhe would alter her purpoſe; and the ſtrength of her arguments ſoon began to make a due impreſſion on his mind. Not being able at once to come to a reſolution, he wrote miſs *Oſmond* the letter, which has already been preſented to my reader; and ordering his horſes to be immediately got ready, with the utmoſt expedition went to his ſeat in the country. When the hope of attaining any enjoyment is once intirely extinguiſhed, the pain, tho' ever ſo exquiſite, has ſeldom any bad con-

ſequence. 'Tis only thoſe, who are naturally low ſpirited and dull, that ſit brooding over their ſorrow, when hope is no more. Sir *Harry Pembroke* was none of thoſe. Ambition and the love of pleaſure were his predominant paſſions. They had ſlept for a time, and now awaked with new ſtrength and vigour. That part of *Alicia*'s letter, where ſhe deſires him to be thankful he was not puniſhed by the grant of his wiſhes, he fully obeyed. The pleaſures he would enjoy, when poſſeſſed of *Sophia*'s fortune, appeared again with double charms, when he thought how near he had been, by a feveriſh folly, to have loſt them for ever.

Two days therefore before he had promiſed in his letter to *Sophia* to return, he haſtened back to town, with as great expedition as he ſet out; and arrived at the admiral's with all the

gaiety

gaiety of a happy bridegroom. He was met by the admiral in the paſſage, who informed him of the danger *Sophia* had been in. Now maſter of himſelf, he could, with eaſe, aſſume a behaviour proper for the occaſion. Impatient to ſee her, he could ſcarce wait till ſhe was informed of his arrival. The flutter her ſpirits underwent, at hearing he was returned, made her pale as aſhes; and ſhe was with great difficulty kept from a fainting fit. With (ſeemingly) the greateſt tenderneſs and concern, he entered her chamber, where the ſoftneſs of his ſighs, and the half ſentences, which his grief interrupted, ſoon revived the ſpirits of the faint-hearted *Sophy*. Mrs. *Betty*, ſeeing no further occaſion for her preſent attendance, left the lovers to themſelves. Sir *Harry* then feigned a tale of the unhappy circumſtances

of a friend, which, from his ſympathizing temper, had been a bar to his happineſs; that now he had got every thing ſettled to his wiſh; and, with all the eloquence of eyes and tongue, begged and prayed ſhe would name a ſhort day for compleating his happineſs. *Sophia* heard him with the moſt agreeable ſurprize ſhe had ever experienced, and was half of opinion ſhe had been jealous without cauſe. Her late ſickneſs had given an additional ſoftneſs to her features, which were naturally ſweet, and Sir *Harry*, in reality, was more pleaſed with her than he had ever been before. She conſented to be his within three weeks; but would not, ſhe ſaid, till ſhe ſaw the counteſs of *Belvedere*, fix the day. No mention was made all this while of *Alicia*. Being informed ſupper was ſerved up, Sir *Harry* handed *Sophia* to the dining-room,

room, where ſhe had not yet been ſince her illneſs. The good admiral was rejoiced to ſee her, and again gave Sir *Harry* an account of her late danger, with all the circumſtances, which his impatience to be up ſtairs had prevented him getting ſo circumſtantially before.

After ſupper, when the ſervants had left the room, the admiral obſerved, that Sir *Harry* was not enquiring for miſs *Montague*. "Has "*Sophy*," ſaid he, "been telling you "how fooliſhly the girl has left us?" "No," returned Sir *Harry*, "miſs "*Oſmond* has not;" a conſcious bluſh overſpreading his face, which did not eſcape the notice of *Sophia*, though her confuſion at the queſtion equalled his. The honeſt admiral, not very quick in his obſervation, ſaw nothing of their confuſion. "Well, "*Sophy*," continued he, "you muſt

" ſhew Sir *Harry Alicia*'s letter, and " let us have his opinion. I declare, " I am concerned about where the " girl can have gone to; at the " ſame time, I am angry at the rea- " ſon ſhe gives for leaving us." *Sophia*'s uneaſineſs increaſed, and her but newly recruited ſpirits failed her ſo much, that ſhe was obliged to deſire her father to ring the bell for her maid. This interrupted the converſation. She was led to her bed-chamber, where ſhe ſoon recovered, though without feeling that pleaſure ſhe had ſo lately enjoyed. Sir *Harry* had time to recover his preſence of mind, before the admiral began again to talk of *Alicia*. When he did, he gave him the whole contents of her letter, as far as he remembered; and Sir *Harry* gave it as his opinion, that *Sophia* was vexed at her ingratitude, and adviſed the admiral

admiral not to mention her before *Sophia*, as in her preſent weakneſs it certainly affected her.

Whether Sir *Harry* thought, that miſs *Oſmond* had any jealouſy of his love for *Alicia*, I cannot ſay. I am apt to believe he had not; but he was very glad to find a pretence for her not being mentioned, as he was ſenſible he could not talk ſo freely about her as he could wiſh. Though *Sophia* could not entirely get rid of her uneaſineſs concerning *Alicia*, the great alteration in Sir *Harry*'s behaviour made her flatter herſelf ſhe would fix him to herſelf. She reſolved, as thinking it the beſt method of doing ſo, never to appear jealous of his affections. Preparations were now going on for the marriage. A new equipage was got, with every thing correſponding to the largeneſs of *Sophia*'s fortune (which was above ſeventy thouſand pounds)

and intirely conſiſtent with Sir *Harry*'s taſte for pomp and ſhow. A few days before the celebration of the marriage, *Sophia* received the following letter from lady *M'Kenzie*.

Lady M'KENZIE *to Miſs* OSMOND.

Madam,

THOUGH I have not the pleaſure of your acquaintance, I am no ſtranger to your character, for which I have a very great eſteem. From your goodneſs, I hope you will pardon my taking the liberty of begging the favour you will let me know the reaſon of my niece *Alicia*'s having left you ſo ſuddenly, without acquainting any of her friends, and going into lodgings. You may believe I was not a little ſurpriſed when ſhe wrote of her having done ſo. She writes me of a miſ-

miſunderſtanding having ariſen betwixt you and her; but does not mention from whence it aroſe. I cannot help thinking, if her reaſon was ſuch as could juſtify her own conduct, ſhe would not have failed to let her friends know the particulars. I beg, dear madam, you will not, from tenderneſs, conceal the cauſe, ſince in doing ſo, you may, perhaps, lead us to ſuſpect worſe than I hope it is. I have deferred giving her a return to her letter, till I hear from you. Sir *Oliver*, though equally unacquainted as I am with the admiral and you, joins me in reſpectful compliments to both; and I am, madam, with the greateſt eſteem,

Yours, &c.

Sophia, without much conſideration, returned the following anſwer.

Miſs

Miſs OSMOND *to Lady* M'KENZIE.

Madam,

I Wiſh, in return to your letter, which needed no apology, I had it in my power to give you a ſatisfactory anſwer; but as to the cauſe of miſs *Montague*'s having left me, I am as much a ſtranger to it as your ladyſhip. She, indeed, left a letter, where ſhe accuſes me of concealing my thoughts from her, which, ſhe ſays, ſhe has taken very much amiſs. I give you my word, madam, I never had any quarrel with miſs *Montague*; and, I confeſs to you, the reaſon ſhe gives for going away appears ſo abſurd, that my father and I cannot help being of opinion, that it is only a pretence; and that ſhe muſt have ſome more ſubſtantial reaſon for leaving us ſo abruptly.

It

It would be wrong in me to form any conjectures. I can truly ſay, I had once a ſincere regard and eſteem for miſs *Montague*; and I wiſh ſincerely, ſhe may have it in her power to juſtify her conduct to her friends. It would give me great pleaſure to hear ſhe was ſettled with any of them in the country. *London* is a very bad place for a young lady to live in, without a guardian. My father joins me in returning our compliments to your ladyſhip and Sir *Oliver*; and I am, madam, with reſpect,

Your Ladyſhip's

Moſt humble Servant,

SOPHIA OSMOND.

Miſs *Oſmond*, when ſhe had finiſhed this epiſtle, thought ſhe had been extremely tender of ſaying any thing to

to *Alicia*'s diſadvantage, and inly applauded her own generoſity. Three weeks had now paſſed ſince *Alicia* had left the admiral's, during which time ſhe was employed in metamorphoſing part of her apparel, which ſhe thought too flanting for ordinary wear; and as ſhe had packed up in a hurry, ſhe now had leiſure to put every thing into order and method. Several letters paſſed, in that time, between her and miſs *Enerom*. That young lady praiſed and encouraged her with all the warmth of friendſhip, and not without ſometimes throwing out too ſevere reflections on miſs *Oſmond*, which *Alicia* never failed reproving in her gentle manner, by telling her it was impoſſible to judge entirely right of the conduct of others; that we ought always to be ſparing of our cenſure, ſince no one can be certain how they themſelves

ſelves would behave in a ſituation they have never experienced. Not having yet heard from any of her aunts, ſhe was beginning to be a little impatient, when the poſt brought her a letter, the contents of which I ſhall here preſent to my readers at large.

Lady M'KENZIE *to Miſs* MONTAGUE.

YOU will no doubt be ſurpriſed, *Alicia*, at my not anſwering your letter ſooner. Yet were you to reflect on your own imprudence in the way you ought to do, you would rather be ſurpriſed at my taking the trouble of writing to you at all. I am no ſtranger to the frivolous reaſon you give for leaving miſs *Oſmond*; and, if you have any other, I do not ſuppoſe it will be more

in

in your favour, ſince it is ſcarce to be imagined, you would conceal what could in the leaſt ſerve as a vindication of your folly. You deſire my ſiſter and me to endeavour to find a place for you as a governeſs. No, *Alicia*, never imagine that your friends will expoſe themſelves, by recommending you as a fit perſon to govern others, who cannot with tolerable prudence govern yourſelf. The only thing we have now agreed to do for you is, to board you in a ſober way in the country. This we look on to be an act of charity, to ſave you from ruin; and what we may do for you in a few years in recommending you to a family of diſtinction, will depend entirely on your future conduct. You may believe, if your behaviour anſwers our wiſh, we will be very well pleaſed to ſave an unneceſſary expence.

We

We indeed think ourſelves much to blame in contributing ſo largely in dreſſing you out as a fine lady, which you have no title to. Had you been with miſs *Oſmond*, more in the character of a dependent, I am apt to believe it would have been better for you. But my ſiſter and I were both fooliſh enough to imagine, that your beauty and the advantage you had of being amongſt the beſt of company, would have gained you a man of fortune for your huſband. But, in place of that, I am afraid, *Alicia*, it has only ſerved to render your poverty and imprudence the more conſpicuous. I don't doubt you will think my reflections rather too ſevere; but, if you are ever ſenſible of your folly, which I hope you will be, you will ſee I have ſaid no more than what is my duty, and that I can have no

end

end in ſaying ſo much but your good. As the cloaths you now have will be quite improper for the country, I deſire you will diſpoſe of them to the beſt advantage, and buy yourſelf ſome apparel more ſuitable to your preſent ſtation. What money you have over, I ſhall judge of your good reſolutions, by your manner of diſpoſing of it. As ſoon as you let me know you agree to obey your friends, I will write to the honeſt woman, whom we intend to board you with. She is an old ſervant of your grand-father's, and will on that account, I dare ſay, be very kind to you. If it is not convenient for her to take you, we will think of ſomebody elſe. Be ſure to write me on the receipt of this; and as you take my advice, I ſhall know whether or not

I will

I will ever again ſubſcribe myſelf your aunt,

H. M'Kenzie.

Judge, gentle reader, of the condition of poor *Alicia*, when ſhe read this epiſtle; while the colour came and went alternately on her cheek, that pride, which her reaſon could not at all times ſuppreſs, ſwelled her breaſt to big, not to get immediate relief by tears. She was no ſooner relieved, than ſhe began to reflect on her own impatience, and to examine her heart, and ſee how far ſhe deſerved to be upbraided by her friends. No perſon, how good ſo ever they may be, but, on a ſtrict examination, will find errors enough to deſerve the croſſes they may meet with in this world. Altho' *Alicia* found few faults of commiſſion, ſhe was not

not intirely free; and thoſe of omiſſion, ſhe found, were innumerable. Tho' ſhe could not find any thing in her conduct to juſtify her aunts behaviour to her, yet ſhe found enough to ſhew her, that providence was kind to her, in thus putting her in mind of her duty. But, as the effect of her diſappointment will be ſhewn fully in the following letter to miſs *Encrom*, I ſhall forbear ſaying any more on the ſubject.

Miſs MONTAGUE *to the Honourable Miſs* ENCROM.

My deareſt *Caroline*,

THE return of my letters to my aunts, which I have ſo long with impatience expected, is at laſt come

come to hand. I incloſe it, my dear girl, for your peruſal. You will ſee, tho' it is wrote only by lady *M'Kenzie*, it contains the ſentiments of both; and that unleſs I condeſcend to become an humble dependent on their bounty, I am no longer to expect their friendſhip or advice. I confeſs to you, tho' my heart, as I imagined, was prepared for mortification, yet I found it no eaſy matter to calm the uneaſineſs this letter has occaſioned, and to fit my mind for proper reflection. While I was agitated by paſſion, I could not help exclaiming againſt my relations, and almoſt, my dear *Caroline*, accuſed providence of partiality to others, and of cruelty to me. My God forgive me! and guard my heart from ſo heinous a ſin. On ſelf-examination, I find how much I've ſtood in need of the ſchool of adverſity, to make

me

me ſenſible of my own weakneſs, and to teach me where I ought to fix my dependence.

In the days of my proſperity, I doubted not of the friendſhip of the world; and I pleaſed myſelf with the conſciouſneſs of the rectitude of my own heart. But, Oh *Caroline*, I have been vain, conceited, and careleſs; and providence has juſtly puniſhed me by means of thoſe, whom nature and gratitude taught me to love and reſpect. My aunts are not unacquainted with the frivolous reaſon I gave miſs *Oſmond* for leaving her. Certainly *Sophy* has wrote to them. But what can I do in my preſent ſituation? could I ever forgive myſelf, were I to intruſt them with my real reaſon; people, who ſeem void of every tender feeling, and think I ſhould accept the firſt man who makes his addreſſes to me, even one whom I have

reaſon

reaſon to think has no nice notions of honour. How do I know but they would laugh at my diſtreſs, and think it a romantic folly? To refuſe Sir *Harry Pembroke* is what they might never forgive, and, perhaps, not thinking the ſecret of any conſequence, might, in ſpite of all I could ſay, reveal what I think, which, if known to miſs *Oſmond*, would render her unhappy. No, I am determined to give them no other reaſon than what they have got already. I am ſenſible, my dear *Caroline*, the obligations I lye under to my aunts, as well as their being my neareſt relations make it my duty to obey them in what I think is not ſinful: but as I thank God I have health, and can work at my needle, I do not think I am a fit object of charity. Charity is indeed an extenſive virtue; but the generoſity of one perſon to ano-

ther, of even the rich to the poor, I do not look on as one of its branches. I am led to obſerve this diſtinction, as I have ſo largely accepted of the one, while I hope, without any unbecoming pride, I refuſe the other.

As ſoon as I had ſufficiently compoſed myſelf, which was not till next morning, I wrote an anſwer to lady *M'Kenzie*, a copy of which I likewiſe incloſe. I then deſired the maid to let her miſtreſs know I would be glad to ſpeak with her, when ſhe could conveniently leave the ſhop. In a few minutes ſhe came up ſtairs. Deſiring her to ſit down, " I have al-
" tered my intention," ſaid I, " Mrs.
" *Conyers*, of going into the coun-
" try, as I told you I propoſed when
" I took your lodgings. Having
" met with a diſappointment, I am
" obliged now to think of ſupport-

ing

" ing myſelf by my own induſtry. " As I cannot afford to keep your " lodgings, I ſent for you to en- " quire if you know of any ſober " family where I could get a ſingle " chamber at a low price; I would " likewiſe be very much obliged to " you (as I take you to be a perſon " of prudence and experience) if " you would adviſe me as to the " beſt method of applying for plain- " work." The good woman was perfectly amazed; for ſhe had conceived, from my dreſs, a high idea of my rank. She returned not an anſwer for a few minutes, while ſhe ſeemed to be eyeing me from head to foot. At laſt, " You ſurpriſe me not a little, " madam," ſaid ſhe: " I cannot think " it poſſible a lady of your appear- " ance ſhould think of ſuch a thing." " People," returned I, " Mrs. *Con-* " *yers*, need not always truſt to ap-

" pearances. There is nothing more
" common than a fine outward ap-
" pearance and an empty pocket.
" You may eaſily believe what I
" propoſe is more from neceſſity
" than choice." " You'll pardon
" me, madam," replied ſhe, " but
" I ſuſpect ſome love-affair has
" brought you away from your pa-
" rents or guardians; and ſince you
" have allowed me the liberty of
" giving my advice, I would really
" adviſe you to return home. The
" uneaſineſs you'll have given your
" friends, and the joy they will be
" in at ſeeing you again, will very
" probably make them receive you
" on your own terms. If they
" ſhould not, there is nothing they
" can propoſe for you, that can be
" ſo hard as you would find conti-
" nually working at your needle.
" It requires perſons of ſtrong con-

ſtitu-

" ſtitutions, bred up to it from their
" infancy, to be able to ſit cloſe at
" work, to riſe early and ſit up late;
" and even if, with all their induſtry,
" they ſhould be able to ſupport
" themſelves, yet they cannot af-
" ford to live in any place but a
" garret. Indeed, madam, if you'll
" believe me, my ſervant maid lives
" a more comfortable life than they."

Mrs. *Conyers* being called to the ſhop, I was left to ruminate on what ſhe had ſaid. Oh, *Caroline*, how my heart ſwelled again, and ſeemed as if ready to burſt. " Oh,
" my God!" ſaid I, " put it in my
" heart to do what is beſt. Re-
" lieve me from my difficulties,
" which, without thy aſſiſtance, muſt
" be inſurmountable." Mrs. *Conyers* returning, and obſerving my tears, which I in vain endeavoured to conceal, begged I would compoſe

myſelf, and tell her if ſhe had not gueſſed the truth. "Oh, no, no, "Mrs. *Conyers*," ſaid I, "you have "not. You have, indeed, repre- "ſented my ſituation in a very diſ- "mal light; for, alas! I have no "kind parent, no relation, nor guar- "dian, to enquire after me, nor re- "gret my abſence, I have, indeed, "relations; but they are at a great "diſtance, and I have little reaſon to "think they will do any thing for "me." "You ſurpriſe me, miſs, "more and more," ſaid ſhe; "and I "cannot help thinking it extremely "odd, that a lady at your early years "ſhould be at a great diſtance from "all her relations. You'll pardon me, "miſs, but I think you have been "very imprudent in leaving them; "and I am afraid you have been "guilty of ſome very great offence, "that can make you think your

"relations

" relations will do nothing for you." Ah, *Caroline*, what muſt a poor creature feel, who is conſcious of having committed a crime, when the bare ſuppoſition of a ſtranger could make me ſo unhappy? I was not able to anſwer with any thing but ſobs, which confirmed her ſuſpicion. The ſuppoſition of my guilt ſeemed to leſſen her reſpect, and, prompted by curioſity, ſhe inſiſted on my telling her who I was; and accordingly, as ſoon as I was able to expreſs myſelf ſo as to be underſtood, I gave her a ſhort hiſtory of the chief circumſtances of my life. After hearing me out, ſhe ſaid " ſhe was extreme-" ly ſorry for me, and that I ought " to ſee and make up matters with " the young lady I had lately left." As I told her that was impoſſible, and continued to be in great diſtreſs, ſhe was kind enough to ſooth me, and

ſaid, that " if I would put up with " a high apartment in her houſe, " ſhe would let me have it for a " trifle, and that ſhe would endea- " vour to procure me work amongſt " her cuſtomers." I was pleaſed, my dear *Caroline*, at the thoughts of continuing in the ſame houſe; and though ſhe had frightened me ſo ſadly at firſt, I was now made eaſier, by her telling me ſhe had done ſo, in order to induce me to return to my friends. I immediately went up ſtairs, and ſaw her apartment, which, tho' my dear *Caroline*, I confeſs to you, it is no other than a garret, yet being extremely clean and neat, I was glad to ſee was no worſe. " Here, " Mrs. *Conyers*," ſaid I, " I hope " to enjoy content. The apartment " will ſuit my circumſtances exact- " ly. If heaven be pleaſed to grant " me health and ſpirits, I ſhall,

" perhaps,

" perhaps, have no reaſon to regret
" my change of life."

You cannot think, *Caroline*, how nicely I have now fitted up my lofty dwelling. Mrs. *Conyers* has purchaſed for me, at a low price, a neat little tent-bed, a table, four chairs, a floor-cloth, drawers, and a dreſſing-glaſs. Not having got immediate employment, I amuſed myſelf in making curtains for my windows of an old gown. I have likewiſe, by a curtain, divided my chamber into two apartments. You cannot think how proud I am of my little contrivance. I mention to you, my dear *Caroline*, all theſe particulars, that you may not figure to yourſelf your *Alicia* a poor creature, diſtreſſed with the cares of the world, diſconſolate and forlorn, the cobwebs hanging over her head, while ſhe, unable to exert herſelf, pines away in fruit-

leſs ſorrow. Thank God, I am wonderfully eaſy, and while I write to my dear *Caroline*, I enjoy no ſmall ſhare of pleaſure. I need not beg of you, my dear girl, to continue to write me frequently; I have too much experienced your goodneſs to doubt it now. Mrs. *Conyers* has juſt now brought me ſome work, and has given me hopes of more, when this is finiſhed. God bleſs you, my dear. Adieu.

A. MONTAGUE.

Copy of a letter from miſs *Montague* to lady *M'Kenzie*, incloſed in the above.

" Madam,

" THE obligations I lye under " to you and my aunt Mrs. " *Grant*, I ſhall ever retain a grate-

" ful

" ful ſenſe of. I wiſh it were in
" my power to ſhew my ſincerity in
" this reſpect, more effectually than
" I can do by words. But, alas! it
" is the only proof I ſhall in, all
" probability, ever have to ſhew;
" and, am ſorry to ſay, it is indeed,
" as the world goes, too ſlender to
" be always credited. I need not ſay
" what pain my having forfeited
" your favour has given me, friend-
" leſs and unprotected as I am at
" preſent: at the ſame time, as
" I am not conſcious of having
" committed any crime, for which
" I ought to do penance, I cannot
" think of going into voluntary
" baniſhment; nor do I ſee, dear
" madam, that in the ſituation you
" think moſt for my good, I can
" ever have an opportunity of ſhew-
" ing myſelf better qualified for a
" governeſs than I am already:

" and as, I thank God, I have " health, and can work at my needle, " I cannot think I'm a fit object of " charity. On all theſe conſidera- " tions, I think myſelf obliged to " refuſe complying with what, I " have no manner of doubt, you " have offered with a good inten- " tion.

" I ſhall be far from ſaying, that " the reaſon I had for leaving miſs " *Oſmond*, is enough to juſtify my " doing ſo to others; yet, as I muſt " have been ſo great a loſer (even " ſuppoſing your ladyſhip had re- " commended me as I expected) I " ſhould imagine that my friends " would conclude, that the reaſon " muſt appear very ſtrong to myſelf, " to induce me to quit a life, that " muſt be ſo agreeable to one of my " years, and hazard a new one, which, " however I might bring myſelf by

" reaſon

" reaſon to be content with it, could " afford no great proſpect of plea- " ſure to one accuſtomed to a life " of gaiety. But do not let your " ladyſhip imagine, that I hint at " any reflection on miſs *Oſmond*. On " the contrary, I never had a greater " eſteem and regard for that young " lady than I have at preſent; and " I with truth can declare, that my " being obliged to leave her has " given me more pain, than any " other conſequence of my change " of ſituation. I conclude with my " beſt wiſhes for your ladyſhip, Sir " *Oliver*, Mr. and Mrs. *Grant*. That " you may have a better opinion " than you have at preſent, of one, " who ſhall always be ambitious to " merit it, ſhall be the prayer of " her, who ſtill takes the liberty to " ſubſcribe herſelf,

" Your ladyſhip's niece,

" A. MONTAGUE."

Lady *M'Kenzie*, on receiving the original of the above copy, did not know whether to be moſt pleaſed with *Alicia*'s good nature and ſpirit, or angry at her refuſing to obey her. She gave the letter to Sir *Oliver*, who, on reading it, ſeemed moſt inclined to the former ſentiment. It was therefore agreed on to write to Mrs. *Grant*, and to aſk her, if ſhe would contribute to board *Alicia* in a more genteel way than they had before propoſed; for as to recommending her as a governeſs, tho' ſhe was now two years older than when it was firſt thought of, they had taken it into their head ſhe was too young. Lady *M'Kenzie*, who did not want a ſhare of good nature, would have been very well pleaſed to have had her niece well married to any gentleman of fortune, or to one with a good proſpect, her own

own ſon excepted: ſhe therefore, now inclined, by *Alicia*'s letter, to think her imprudence was not ſo great as ſhe at firſt imagined, was willing, by a ſmall addition to what was allowed her formerly, to give her a chance for two or three years, of being married advantageouſly; but tho' well ſatisfied with her good intention, ſhe ſeemed in no hurry to put it in execution. Company coming ſucceſſively to *Mountain-Hall*, ſhe could not find leiſure to write to her ſiſter; and as the time paſſed away, her thoughts of her niece became every day more faint.

In the mean time, *Alicia*, who had no great expectation of hearing again from her aunts, was endeavouring to ſuit her mind to her circumſtances. The taſk ſhe found not quite ſo eaſy, as, ſhe thought, reaſon and religion would have rendered it: yet how many,

many, who loll in their coach and ſix, who raiſe the envy of thouſands, experience not half the ſatisfaction ſhe did? Mrs. *Conyers* was as good as her word in getting her work from her cuſtomers; yet not ſo much as to keep her conſtantly employed. But as I would not omit Miſs *Encrom*'s return to *Alicia*'s laſt letter, I will here inſert it.

Miſs ENCROM *to Miſs* MONTAGUE.

IT is impoſſible, my deareſt *Alicia*, to ſay how much you pleaſe and ſurpriſe me by your reſolution and ſpirit. You have been born, my dear, to ſhine in adverſity, and to hold up a light to your friend, to ſhew her how much you are her ſuperior. I was ſo much provoked on read-

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ing your aunt's letter, that, though I am charmed with your moderation, I ſtill find myſelf unable to follow your example in forgiving them. Indeed, my dear *Alicia*, I ſee through the meanneſs of their conduct, and imagine I can account for every inſtance of their odd behaviour. But let me not give my pen a liberty, and vex my amiable friend, who has already ſuffered ſo much from the folly and paſſion of others. Yet, why do I ſay ſuffered? ſince, by a juſt ſenſe of the inſignificancy of worldly happineſs, and a proper reſignation to the will of heaven, you have felt leſs pain, than moſt people do on the moſt trifling diſappointment.

Your behaviour, my dear *Alicia*, convinces me, that no one can be tolerably eaſy in this life, without a fund of contentment in their own breaſt,

breaſt, independent of the caprice of the world: and who, my dear, can enjoy this, but thoſe whoſe reaſon ſtands continually as a guard on their paſſions, to keep them in ſubjection? Yours, my dear *Alicia*, has never yet played truant. When your reaſon receives a ſhock from your paſſions, and gives you a momentary pain, how quickly does ſhe reaſſume her ſeat, and with renewed ſtrength and dignity ſhew how fit ſhe is to govern?

I am this moment informed, that your good intention has ſo far ſucceeded, that miſs *Oſmond* was married laſt *Thurſday* to Sir *Harry Pembroke*. I know this news will give you pleaſure. I am convinced, by *Sophy*'s not making any inquiry after you, that ſhe has been jealous of Sir *Harry*'s love, and has had diſcernment to ſee his affection was placed

placed on you. In that caſe, I do not imagine ſhe will ever make an apology for her odd behaviour, and invite you back; but as you are determined not to go, I need care the leſs. In time I hope to be a conſiderable gainer, ſince, if ever I be married to lord *Dey*, you know, I inſiſted you ſhould paſs one half of the year with me. Now I hope to have the happineſs of my dear *Alicia* continually with me. To no perſon will I part with her, but to one, whoſe love and merit ſhall gain her hand with her heart.

I intended to have wrote you a long letter; but you muſt know lady *Encrom* (who, God be thanked, ſhe ſays, had never any taſte for reading or ſcribbling) has taken it into her head to prohibit me the free uſe of my pen. For her part, ſhe never knew any of your reading

and

and writing ladies, whoſe heads were not full of intrigue; and that if I had been brought up from my infancy under her prudent care, I ſhould not have had the aſſurance to have diſobeyed my parents, in refuſing a huſband they had found out for me. My father liſtens to every word ſhe ſays, as proceeding from the mouth of an oracle. In ſhort, my dear *Alicia*, to keep peace in the family, I am obliged ſeemingly to obey; and ſince they make out, that ignorance is the mother of virtue, knowledge the parent of vice, as a true daughter of *Eve*, I muſt eat of the forbidden fruit, in ſpite of the fatal conſequence. But, to be ſerious, *Alicia*, don't you think it very extraordinary, that my father, who is a man of ſenſe, ſhould miſtake envy and low cunning for

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ſenſe and diſcretion? Well may I ſay with the poet,

There is nothing a wonder, or elſe all is wonder.

You'll direct to me for the future, under cover to *Nancy Wellwood*, who ſends you her beſt wiſhes.

You may expect to hear from me again ſoon, and believe me to be, my ever deareſt *Alicia*,

Your ſincere and

Affectionate friend,

C. Encrom.

When miſs *Encrom* wrote the above letter, ſhe was under the greateſt uneaſineſs for *Alicia* that can be conceived. Lady *Encrom*, who had received the news of miſs *Oſmond*'s marriage by a letter from *London*, was informed, at the ſame time, that miſs *Montague* had left admiral *Oſmond*'s, and was kept

kept in private lodgings by a young nobleman. Miſs *Oſmond*'s maid, who, my reader may remember, firmly believed ſhe had gone off with Sir *Harry Pembroke*, had kept the ſecret ſo far as not to mention Sir *Harry*; but the whole being too big for her own breaſt, ſhe could not withſtand the entreaty of lady *Belvedere*'s maid, her friend and companion, but prudently revealed the one half. A young lady of miſs *Montague*'s beauty and merit, who had frequented all the faſhionable places of reſort, could not long be abſent, without being enquired after. The ſlight anſwers miſs *Oſmond*, now lady *Pembroke*, gave, and her endeavouring to avoid being particular, ſoon raiſed the curioſity of all her acquaintance.

Lady *Belvedere*, who knew her maid was intimate with Mrs. *Betty*, deſired her to enquire particularly about miſs *Montague*; and accordingly

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ſhe failed not, the firſt opportunity, to obey her lady's orders. Mrs. *Betty*, after many ſignificant ſhakes of the head, and ſhrugs of the ſhoulders, told her companion down-right, "that, "to her certain knowledge, miſs "*Montague* was gone into keep-"ing." But wonder all ye, who believe not a woman can keep a ſecret! when I here affirm, that not all the promiſes of inviolable ſecrecy, which lady *Belvedere*'s maid gave to Mrs. *Betty*, could prevail on her to tell who was the perſon *Alicia* had gone off with. Obliged to return to her lady with only part of the ſecret, ſhe endeavoured to make out the whole by aſſiſting her ladyſhip to gueſs the reſt.

Who, that knows any thing, but knows, with what rapidity ſcandal flies from one place to another, increaſing in its bulk like a ball, as it rolls along the ſnow-clad earth.

Lady *Encrom*, who never had any favour, either for her daughter-in-law or *Alicia*, received the news with that pleaſure peculiar to little minds. She expatiated on her own ſagacity, which had led her, ſhe ſaid, from the firſt time ſhe ſaw *Alicia*, to know what ſhe would be. Having no remembrance of her own ſtate before ſhe was married to lord *Encrom*, ſhe diſplayed her wit in ſarcaſtic expreſſions on the conſequence of pride and poverty. Miſs *Encrom*, who was always on her guard not to provoke her ladyſhip, mildly contradicted the report, by ſaying ſhe was certain it was falſe, and wondered who could be ſo malicious as to frame ſuch a ſtory. But lady *Encrom* declaring ſhe believed it to be true, and talking as above, miſs *Encrom* loſt all patience. "Good "heavens!" ſaid ſhe, "is this to "be borne? ſhall I ſit calmly, and

" hear the character of my deareſt " friend baſely aſperſed? No, ma- " dam, (while her tears overflowed) " in duty to my father I have taken " uſage from you, which I queſtion " much if a woman of ſpirit ought " to have taken: but, depend upon " it, I will never ſit tamely, and " hear you ſpeak one diſreſpectful " word of miſs *Montague*. No, ma- " dam, altho' I ſhould be obliged " to leave my father's houſe, and " lye under all the ſcandalous re- " ports that malice can propagate, " I will not bear it." " Oh! your " ſervant! madam," ſaid lady *Encrom*, with a malicious grin, " has " your proud ſpirit at laſt broke " out! I have, indeed, no manner " of doubt, but miſs *Encrom* will " find a keeper, as well as her com- " panion; and I have as little doubt, " that the cenſure of the world will

" give her very little concern." " Gracious heaven give me pati- " ence!" ſaid miſs *Encrom*, " and " guard me from ſaying any thing " unbecoming my ſex." So ſaying, ſhe made what haſte ſhe could out of the room, leaving lady *Encrom*, vowing that ſhe ſhould be turned out of doors.

As miſs *Encrom* was hurrying up ſtairs to her chamber, ſhe was met by her father, who was coming out of his library. Obſerving her tears— " What is the matter," ſaid he, " *Caroline*?" " There was a time," returned ſhe, " when I could have " told my father of every trifling " circumſtance, that gave me unea- " ſineſs; but—" But what, *Caro-* " *line*," taking her hand, and deſiring her to walk into the library, when lady *Encrom*, with a loud voice from the dining-room door, called out

out to his lordſhip to come down ſtairs immediately. *Caroline* durſt not offer another word. Her father deſired her to go up to her chamber, ſaying, as he left her, that he ſuppoſed ſhe had been ſaucy to lady *Encrom*, which if he found ſhe had, ſhe might depend on it he would not eaſily forgive her. Lord *Encrom* no ſooner went down ſtairs, than her ladyſhip began exclaiming againſt miſs *Encrom*; and taking out the letter ſhe had received, aſked his lordſhip, whether or not ſhe had not reaſon to ſpeak againſt miſs *Montague*, who had given herſelf up to wickedneſs? And now, my lord, ſaid ſhe, after he had read it, what do you think of your daughter affronting me for doing my duty, and having had the aſſurance to tell me, that ſhe will not ſuffer me to ſay a diſreſpectful word of her pretty companion? Then followed the in-

vectives, mentioned in miſs *Encrom*'s letter, againſt your reading ladies; while plays, novels, and, in the heat of her zeal, all the furniture of a circulating library were condemned, as the vile propagators of diſobedience and every other miſchief. "My "deareſt life," ſaid his lordſhip, "com- "poſe yourſelf, and be aſſured ſhe ſhall "be made ſenſible of your goodneſs, "and behave accordingly, or ſhe ſhall "not be countenanced as my daugh- "ter."

Lady *Encrom* began to think, that were ſhe to inſiſt on *Caroline*'s leaving her father's houſe on this quarrel, her own character would ſuffer; and having a very great regard for appearances, without the leaſt for reality, ſhe told his lordſhip that ſhe would put up with the affront, rather than his daughter ſhould run the hazard of being cenſured by the world,

world, provided ſhe would aſk her pardon, and promiſe before her father not to keep up a correſpondence with miſs *Montague*. His lordſhip, after expreſſing his ſenſe of her ladyſhip's goodneſs, went up ſtairs to his daughter. It muſt be confeſſed, that lady *Encrom*'s requeſt did not ſeem at all unreaſonable: yet, who at the ſame time would not have thought it a piece of the greateſt cruelty, if, in obedience to her parent, miſs *Encrom* had given up her friend, when ſhe was convinced of her innocence, and knew that ſhe was deſerted by her relations, and had no one to comfort or encourage her but herſelf.

Miſs *Encrom*, before her father came up ſtairs, began, after a flood of tears, to think more calmly what might be the conſequence of this quarrel. She wiſely conſidered it

would be of no ſervice to her friend for her to be at open war with her mother-in-law on her account. She therefore began to wiſh the matter were made up; and, gueſſing ſhe would be prohibited writing to miſs *Montague*, reſolved to think on ſome method to carry on the correſpondence without her father's, or lady *Encrom*'s knowledge. It is needleſs to give my reader the whole converſation betwixt lord *Encrom* and his daughter. Let it ſuffice to ſay, that miſs *Encrom* aſſerted, that ſhe was certain there was not a more virtuous young creature in the world than miſs *Montague*: yet with her father, her aſſertions were of very little weight, as ſhe could not but confeſs, that *Alicia* had left lady *Pembroke*, and was not gone to any of her relations. But tho' appearances had not been againſt her, it would have been the

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ſame thing to his lordſhip, who would not, for the world, have contradicted lady *Encrom*: he therefore inſiſted with his daughter, that ſhe ſhould not either write to or receive letters from miſs *Montague*, under pain of his everlaſting diſpleaſure; and likewiſe that ſhe ſhould aſk lady *Encrom* pardon, for having ſpoke to her in the rude manner ſhe had done. Miſs *Encrom* did not well know how to do this: yet ſhe at laſt prevailed with herſelf to do ſo.

Many of my readers will perhaps accuſe her of meanneſs, in condeſcending ſo far. Others will rather blame her for promiſing to her parent what ſhe had no intention to perform. Children certainly ought not to judge of what is proper or improper, in oppoſition to the will of their parents: at the ſame time when we arrive at an age capable of regulating

our conduct according to the dictates of honour and conſcience, I do not ſee that we ought to humour the frailty of our parents, by obeying them in doing an ungenerous action: nor can I in juſtice accuſe miſs *Encrom* of meanneſs. On the contrary, it would have ſhewn an obſtinate and very bad temper, had ſhe refuſed to obey her father, in what could be of no bad conſequence to any one; nay, I will go ſo far as to ſay, there can be nothing more ſhocking to human nature, than to ſee a perſon arrived at the years of diſcretion boldly refuſing to be directed by their parents. But there is a faithful monitor in our own breaſt, which will teach us the nice diſtinctions betwixt right and wrong; and of two evils, when under a neceſſity, like miſs *Encrom*, of chooſing one, will not fail to point out the leaſt. Miſs *Encrom* would very fain have conditioned

ditioned with her father, before ſhe aſked lady *Encrom* pardon, or promiſed not to write to *Alicia*, that he would get her ladyſhip to promiſe not to mention miſs *Montague* before her, as ſhe owned her temper was ſuch, that ſhe could not be always on her guard, nor could anſwer for herſelf but ſhe might again diſoblige her ladyſhip. But my lord told her, he would make no conditions with lady *Encrom*; but he did not ſuppoſe, after ſhe had owned her fault, that her ladyſhip would renew the ſubject.

The affair being thus made up, miſs *Encrom* wrote the letter to *Alicia*, which I have already preſented to my reader, in which ſhe takes care not to write one word, that could make *Alicia* ſuſpect ſhe was charged not to correſpond with her in particular; rightly judging it

would have added to her diſtreſs. In a few days after miſs *Encrom* had quarrelled with her mother-in-law, ſhe found ſhe might do the ſame with all her acquaintance for much the ſame reaſon. Every company ſhe went into was full of the ſtory, with almoſt as many different circumſtances as were the perſons who told it. In vain did miſs *Encrom* aſſert her knowing it to be falſe. They argued, it was impoſſible for her to know at ſuch a diſtance; and that it was not to be ſuppoſed ſhe would write to any of her acquaintance, and let them know of her fall. In ſhort, poor miſs *Encrom* was highly blamed for pretending to contradict what was ſo generally believed. Finding it impoſſible to ſilence the clamour, after telling them that ſhe knew where *Alicia* was, and from many concurring circumſtances was certain

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the ſtory raiſed againſt her was falſe, though ſhe was not at liberty to mention the particulars, ſhe kept her chamber ſeveral weeks, till the ſtory ſhould die of itſelf. Indeed, the uneaſineſs of her mind gave her a juſt pretence for doing ſo; the effects of it being as viſible in her countenance, as if ſhe had laboured under a pretty ſevere bodily illneſs.

It is not to be ſuppoſed, that a ſtory, ſo keenly handed about, would not reach *Alicia*'s friends in the North. There are always buſy bodies ready to carry a tale of this kind to the ears of thoſe, whoſe neglect of the unhappy perſon may be ſuppoſed to give them pain. Thoſe zealous puniſhers of vice every where abound. Lady *M'Kenzie*, who had forgot the contents of *Alicia*'s laſt letter, which had made her reſolve to place her in a genteel boarding-houſe; at leaſt,

ſo far that her zeal to execute her purpoſe was conſiderably cooled; was now beginning to reaſon with herſelf, that what ſhe was about to do was extravagance, and not doing juſtice to her own family. However, thinking again on *Alicia*'s beauty, and the chance ſhe had of being advantageouſly married, ſhe would very fain have adhered to her firſt reſolution. She was weighing the matter thus nicely, when the report of *Alicia*'s fall reached *Mountain-Hall*. Who it was that brought or ſent the news, I could never learn; but ſo it happened, that her ladyſhip not only heard it, but believed every word of the matter. She no longer heſitated what was to be done, but reſolved directly to think no more of her. Sir *Oliver* agreed that nothing could be done, bid her ladyſhip be thankful their

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ſon had eſcaped the ſnare, and not vex herſelf; ſince, if people were to do ſo for the miſconduct of their relations, they might make themſelves continually unhappy. The knight might have ſpared himſelf the trouble of giving this good advice, her ladyſhip feeling very little or no uneaſineſs about her niece.

While various reports were flying about, the amiable *Alicia*, pure as an angel in compariſon of what ſhe was repreſented, was buſied in earning her humble fare, and improving her mind by juſt reflections on the vanity of the world. She was quite ignorant of what was ſaid againſt her, and looked on herſelf as ſo inſignificant a part of the creation, by reaſon of her want of that which can keep us from crumbling under the notice of the great, that, except her dear friend miſs *Encrom*, ſhe

ſhe thought all her former acquaintance, by that time, had blotted her out of their memory. Omitting ſeveral letters, which paſſed betwixt theſe two young ladies in the ſhort ſpace of ſix weeks, I will now preſent my reader with one from *Alicia*.

Miſs MONTAGUE *to the Honourable Miſs* ENCROM.

My deareſt *Caroline*,

I HAVE met with ſo many adventures ſince I wrote you my laſt, that my ſpirits are almoſt exhauſted. I will endeavour, however, to be as particular as I can. On *Sunday* afternoon, I invited Mrs. *Conyers* to drink tea with me. After talking on ſeveral little matters, and telling her how much I thought myſelf

ſelf obliged to her for procuring me work—" I am afraid, miſs *Mon-*
" *tague*," ſaid ſhe, " you will en-
" danger your health by cloſe fit-
" ting. I have been thinking, if you
" would trade a little, it would not
" only ſerve as an amuſement, and
" ſave your eyes, but it would alſo
" be more profitable, than work-
" ing continually at your needle."
" Alas!" ſaid I, " Mrs. *Conyers*, you
" do not conſider, that I have nei-
" ther money nor acquaintance to
" encourage me. Beſides, I think
" myſelf much happier in living in
" this retired manner, than I could
" poſſibly be though I had theſe ad-
" vantages."

" Indeed, miſs," ſaid ſhe, " as
" to your want of acquaintance,
" experience has taught me to think,
" that would be no loſs to you.
" People naturally like to deal with
" thoſe

" thoſe they have no connection
" with; and I don't know any thing,
" that can be a greater diſadvantage
" to a young perſon ſetting out in
" trade, than having great expecta-
" tions from the recommendation
" of their friends." " You ſurpriſe
" me, Mrs. *Conyers*," ſaid I, " how
" can that be?" " Why, miſs,"
ſaid ſhe, " a young perſon unex-
" perienced in the ways of the
" world, lays out her money or cre-
" dit according to her expectations,
" and often finds herſelf entangled
" before thoſe ſhe depended on
" think ſhe is ſufficiently qualified
" for them to deal with. I ſhall
" not ſay, it is always the caſe;
" but I believe there is not one in
" ten finds it otherwiſe. But what
" I would adviſe you, miſs *Mon-*
" *tague*, is, to take, from an ac-
" quaintance of mine, a few fans

" or

" or laces, on condition, that if " you don't ſell them, you ſhall re- " turn them again. There is a " gentlewoman who has been talk- " ing to me about it, and ſays, " ſhe will not only divide the pro- " fit with you, but will give you " directions to the families ſhe uſed " to frequent, where you will have " a good chance of diſpoſing of " them. Mrs. *Jackſon* (the name of " the gentlewoman) being frail, and " not able to go about herſelf, will " be glad of a young perſon, ſuch " as you, whom, on my recom- " mendation, ſhe can ſafely truſt." I thanked Mrs. *Conyers* for her concern about my affairs; but told her, " I did not think myſelf at all " qualified for ſuch an undertaking." She ſeemed to impute my refuſal to pride, and modeſtly enough hint- ed that I ought to think nothing

below

below me, that was honeſt; that though I had, by my induſtry, as yet made both ends to meet, people ought to look forward, and endeavour to lay up ſomething for ſickneſs or old age. "Well," returned I, "Mrs. *Conyers*, your ar-"guments are extremely good, and "I will think ſeriouſly about your "propoſal."

Accordingly, my dear *Caroline*, as ſoon as Mrs. *Conyers* left me, I began to examine my heart, and found, that, with all my boaſted humility, a remainder of wrong pride lay yet lurking in a corner. "Here have "I ſat down," ſaid I to myſelf, "contented, thinking I have done "my duty; when, alas! I'm afraid, "I've rather, as it were, in a pet, "renounced the world, and, un-"known to myſelf, am deſpiſing "providence by my refuſing what

it

" it ſeems to have ſquared out for
" me as my duty to perform.
" Down, down," ſaid I, " pride!
" and, encouraged by the praiſes
" of my dear *Caroline*, let me again
" attend to the dictates of reaſon."
Next morning I went down to Mrs. *Conyers*, and told her, I would follow her advice as ſoon as ſhe pleaſed. In the afternoon ſhe brought me the gentlewoman, who talked to me of the great truſt ſhe was to put in me, and of the conſiderable advantage and pleaſure I would have in going amongſt her genteel cuſtomers, till my ſpirits were perfectly fatigued. She then gave me ſeveral pieces of lace with the prices marked, and half a dozen Indian fans. I cannot ſay I thought the latter very ſaleable; but as ſhe ſeemed to think ſhe was doing me a great favour, I did not imagine, from the character

ſhe

ſhe had got of me from Mrs. *Conyers*, that I had any right to give my opinion of them.

I don't know when I ſhould have got rid of her, if ſhe had not been ſent for by one of her cuſtomers. "Well, miſs," ſaid ſhe, "you ſee "I have not time to let you into "the ſecrets of my buſineſs at pre- "ſent; neither muſt I give it you "all at once: but if you anſwer "my expectations, you ſhall have "it by degrees. You will go firſt," continued ſhe, "to the miſs *Bridges* "in *Cheapſide*. They are young "ladies of vaſt fortunes; tell them "you are come from widow *Jack-* "*ſon*, with a ſight of her laces of "the neweſt pattern: no fear but "you'll get a favourable reception. "You'll go next to Mrs. *Ranger*, "a rich widow in *Cornhill*. Then "call on Mrs. *Spencer*, who lives oppo-

" oppoſite: her huſband is an old " rich devil. And laſt of all (I " would not have you go to too " many on your firſt trial,) go to " Mrs. *Freeman* in *Biſhopgate-Street.* " Always ſend in word you are come " from widow *Jackſon*, and there is " no fear of you." " Very well," ſaid I, " Mrs. *Jackſon*, I will not " detain you; only allow me to " ſet down theſe names with the di- " rections, as I have a very bad " memory." This done, Mrs. *Jack-ſon* took her leave.

Think, my dear *Caroline*, on the waywardneſs of my heart. I could not eat a morſel, nor ſleep one minute the whole night, with the thoughts of my intended expedition. In ſhort, my dear, by the morning I was half blind with crying. Reſolved to get the better of a weakneſs, which I was aſhamed of, I ſet about preparing my-

myſelf to go, and accordingly trudged away in my pattens, (which I have now learned myſelf to walk with) about eleven o'clock. Every coach that drove paſt me, I imagined was filled with ſome of my former acquaintance, who were ſtretching out their heads to look after me. How ſhall I behave, ſaid I to myſelf, ſhould I meet any of them at the houſes I am going to? With theſe thoughts I walked, or rather, I may ſay, moved along the ſtreets, while the buſy multitude juſtled me from one ſide of the pavement to the other. I was rouzed a little by the head of a half beau, who ſtared under my hat, and ſwore I was the prettieſt little demure looking angel he had ever ſeen. Imputing his aſſurance to his ſuppoſing, by my ſlow pace, that I was an idle creature, walking on purpoſe to draw the attention of ſuch as he, I walked

quicker, and in a few minutes got within two or three doors of the miſs *Bridges*'s; when finding my courage almoſt fail me, I was obliged to walk back two or three hundred yards, till I could try and recover my ſpirits. Returning again very ſlowly, I got to the door in as much dread, as if I had been conſcious of having done the miſs *Bridges* an injury, for which they would undoubtedly puniſh me. A humble knock I gave at the door made the ſervants in no hurry to anſwer me. Glad of an excuſe to myſelf for not going in, I was about to come away, when I thought I certainly ought to give another tap. On giving a ſecond, the door was opened by a ſervant maid, who aſked me whom I wanted? With a faint voice, I am come, ſaid I, with ſome laces from Mrs. *Jackſon* to the miſs *Bridges*. Without making

making me any return, ſhe ſhut the door, and, humming a tune, tript down ſtairs to the kitchen, leaving me ſtanding in the paſſage. A footman coming up immediately after, I ſuppoſed he was ſent by the maid to acquaint the ladies of my being there. After I had ſtood a full half hour, the footman at laſt came down ſtairs, and obſerving me, aſked whom I waited for? Anſwering him as I had done the maid, he civilly enough ſaid he would acquaint his ladies directly. He accordingly went up ſtairs, and returning in a few minutes, deſired me to walk into a parlour, and his ladies would be with me preſently. After waiting from the time I went into the parlour complete two hours, the footman again returned, and told me that his ladies deſired I would call again to-morrow, for they

could not poſſibly look at the laces that morning.

In haſte to go on with the adventures of the day, I will not, my dear *Caroline*, give you any of my reflections. To Mrs. *Ranger*'s in *Cornhill* I next ſet out. I had not gone above a hundred paces, when I was met by two young officers, who, ſtopping ſhort of a ſudden, ſwore I was the prettieſt creature ever was ſeen, and begged I would allow one of them to carry my parcel. Not returning them any anſwer, but walking on, they went along with me, talking the moſt ridiculous ſtuff ever was heard. Good heavens! thought I, is it thus that young creatures are inſulted, who are obliged to work for their livelihood? I was ready to cry, my dear *Caroline*, with vexation, but had not courage to ſpeak. One of them ſwore I was certainly dumb,

which gave the other an opportunity to exert his wit on that advantage, and the general glibneſs of women's tongues. I walked now as quick as ever I could, my face glowing with indignation. At laſt, almoſt out of breath, I got to the houſe of Mrs. *Ranger*. Confuſed, and not remembering the ſingle knock, which I ought to have given at the door, I gave a rat-tat, as loud as would have been given by the footman of a lady of quality, her ladyſhip in waiting. My two 'ſquires, judging by my knock at the door, I was a perſon of diſtinction, aſked me pardon, and ſneaked away. A footman came flying to the door. I was ready to ſink at my miſtake, when obſerving my parcel, he aſked me, who it was that knocked? I anſwered it was I, and was going to tell him of the two rude men that occaſioned my doing

ſo,

ſo, when he giving a loud laugh, I was again ſo diſcompoſed, that I could not ſay a word.

A bell ringing he left me in the paſſage, and I was going to make my eſcape out of the houſe, when Mrs. *Ranger*'s maid, obſerving me, aſked, if I had any buſineſs with her miſtreſs? I then told her whom I came from, while I was ſo agitated, that I could ſcarcely ſtand. She immediately went, and informed her miſtreſs; and I was deſired to walk up ſtairs. I was uſhered into the dreſſing-room, where Mrs. *Ranger* received me with a loud laugh, and aſked me if I kept a footman. I made no anſwer, but fell to unlooſing my parcel, when obſerving my hand tremble, ſhe continued her laugh, with a "Lard! girl, you "have got the palſy. Pray what "is become of *Jackſon*? I have

" not ſeen her theſe three weeks. " Has ſhe got any new waſh for " the face? I vow it was the od- " deſt compoſition ſhe brought me " laſt ever was made." " I really " don't know, madam, whether ſhe " has or not. Pray, will you be ſo " good as to look at the laces?" Sitting down at her toilette, ſhe began to adjuſt her head-dreſs, without giving me any anſwer, or ſeeming to remember I was in the room. While ſhe continued practiſing all the ridiculous airs imaginable in the glaſs, I had time to recollect my ſpirits, and to think how abſurd it was to be ſo uneaſy at the folly of people I had no connection with. " Pray, ma- " dam," ſaid I again, " will you " be ſo good as look at the laces?"

" Are you the young woman " *Jackſon* was propoſing to get, to " aſſiſt her in her buſineſs?" " N—o, y—es,

" ye—s,—Ma'am"—" You are on " trial, I ſuppoſe." Turning about her chair from the toilette, " Let me " look at you, child. Upon my " word very pretty: where got you " thoſe languiſhing eyes?" Her maid coming in, " *Bret*," ſaid ſhe, " pray, " look what a pretty girl *Jackſon* " has got: obſerve her eyes." The maid beginning to ſtare as her miſtreſs had done, I loſt all patience. " I ſuppoſe, madam," ſaid I, " you " are not for any of the laces at " preſent," and rolling up my parcel, the lady and her maid again fell into an immoderate fit of laughter; during which I made what haſte I could down ſtairs, and, the ſtreet door being open, I made my eſcape; while the maid continued laughing, and calling after me, " young wo- " man, miſs, miſs, pray, come back; " Mrs. *Ranger* wants to look at the

" laces." Mrs. *Ranger* and you may go where you pleaſe, and look for laces (thought I) you ſhall ſee none of mine. When I was out of the reach of their impertinence, I could not help laughing, in ſpite of the lowneſs of my ſpirits, at this adventure.

Now (thinks I) I ſhall go to Mrs. *Freeman*'s. But, in all probability, this will be the laſt expedition of the kind I ſhall ever undertake: yet that I may be fully convinced, that I can make nothing of it, I will wait on this lady. As for Mrs. *Spencer*, I could not think of venturing there, ſhe being too near Mrs. *Ranger*'s, whoſe maid, I thought, might come out, and teaze me to go back. I got to Mrs. *Freeman*'s, without any particular incident. The footman conducted me into the houſekeeper's room, where I was deſired

ſired to wait till his lady had done dreſſing. Without going to inform her of my being there, he very familiarly took a chair, and ſat down by me. Riſing up, I ſaid, "I "would call again, for I could not "poſſibly wait." "I beg, miſs," ſaid he, "you would not think of "going. My lady will very ſoon "be dreſt. She is not one of thoſe "who take five or ſix hours at "their toilette. You muſt take a "glaſs of wine. I never had the "pleaſure of ſeeing you here be-"fore." I thanked him; ſaid "I "could not taſte a drop, and was "going." "Allow me, madam, "before you go, to enquire if my "lady is dreſt." So leaving me to think on my humble ſtate, he went up ſtairs, returned in a few minutes, and ſhewed me up to his lady. She ſeems to be about forty. She de-

ſired me to come in with ſo much engaging affability and ſweetneſs, enquiring how Mrs. *Jackſon* did, and if ſhe had got good ſale for her laces lately, that I beheld her with pleaſure and reſpect. Obſerving me pale and fatigued, ſhe deſired her maid to bring me a diſh of chocolate, and bid me ſit down, while ſhe looked at the laces. I could not help, my dear *Caroline*, reflecting on the difference betwixt this lady and Mrs. *Ranger*: the one, with ſo much goodneſs, and I may ſay, humanity, treating her inferior as a being ſuſceptible of pain and pleaſure, while eaſe and dignity appeared in her look and manner, which at once commanded love and reverence; while the other, by folly and affectation, deſtroyed that reſpect which otherwiſe would be her due, and, in its place, filled the mind with contempt

of

of her, and regret for the degeneracy of human nature.

Whilſt I ſat, Mrs. *Freeman* aſked me if "I lived with Mrs. *Jackſon*;" to which I anſwered, "I did not, "but Mrs. *Jackſon* being frail, pro- "poſed to allow me part of her "profit, if I would aſſiſt her in "going amongſt her cuſtomers; that "this was the firſt day of my "trial, and I did not think my- "ſelf I ſhould anſwer her purpoſe." "Why," ſaid ſhe, with a ſmile, "I "ſuppoſe, you have met with no "encouragement; but you ſhould "not deſpair all at once. I will "purchaſe from you a ſuit of laces, "and you may tell Mrs. *Jackſon*, I "bought them on your account. "I like to encourage a young be- "ginner. A tear of ſenſibility fill- "ed my eye, which I imagined ſhe "obſerved, and I thought ſhe on-

" ly refrained aſking me queſtions, " concerning my former ſituation, " to avoid giving me pain. Taking " out her purſe, ſhe gave me the " money for the lace, and deſired " me to tell Mrs. *Jackſon* ſhe would " be glad ſhe would call on her with " her conveniency." I left this lady with regret, and ſuch an effect had her goodneſs and advice, that I reſolved again not to deſpair of ſucceeding in this way of life.

Going along the ſtreets, muſing, as you may imagine, on the different adventures I had met with, an ill-looking man, with a brown coat, and a ſhort cut wig, made up to me; and very familiarly aſked me how I did, by the name of *Foord*. " You are miſtaken, Sir," ſaid I, " in the perſon. My name is not " *Foord*." " You'll pardon me, " madam," returned he; " ſure if " your

" your name is not *Foord*, I've cer-
" tainly had the pleaſure of ſeeing
" you ſomewhere. If I may be ſo
" bold, pray what is your name?"
I had no great inclination to an-
ſwer him; yet I thought common
civility required me to do ſo. " My
" name, Sir," ſaid I, " is *Montague*.
" I ſuppoſe I only reſemble one of
" your acquaintance; for I do not
" remember my having ever ſeen you
" before." " *Montague*," returned
he, in ſurprize: " the name of the
" woman in the world I love beſt.
" *Montague*, madam, is the name
" of my wife. I am ſure, miſs
" *Montague*, it would afford my
" wife an infinite deal of pleaſure
" to be made acquainted with a
" young lady of your name, with
" ſo modeſt an appearance. I ſhall
" think myſelf extremely fortunate,
" if, by my miſtaking you for miſs

" *Foord*, I ſhould have the happi-
" neſs of introducing you into my
" family, where I can promiſe you,
" you will be hoſpitably enter-
" tained." A moſt extraordinary in-
ſtance of hoſpitality! thought I.
" I am, perhaps, much obliged to
" you Sir," ſaid I; " but, I think,
" I ſhould ill deſerve the favoura-
" ble opinion you ſeem to have of
" me, were I to conſent to be in-
" troduced to any place, by a per-
" ſon I know nothing of. I thank
" you, Sir, for your civility, which,
" I hope, is well intended; but I
" beg to be excuſed from accept-
" ing your invitation." So ſay-
ing, I curtſied, and wiſhed him a
good morning: but he was not to
leave me ſo eaſily. " Pray, ma-
" dam," ſaid he, " I hope no of-
" fence, I admire your prudence,
" and am the more anxious to be

" further

" further acquainted with you. You " will allow me, I hope, to ſee you " home, though you won't do me " the favour to come to my houſe." I did not know in the world how to get rid of him. His perſeverance confirmed me in my ſuſpicions of him, which were not very favourable from the firſt.

The ribbon of one of my pattens giving way, I ſtept into a ſhop to have it tied. My gentleman, who had offered to do it for me, ſaid, " ſince I would not allow him " that favour, he would wait till I " came out of the ſhop; for he was " reſolved to ſee me home." The gentlewoman of the ſhop was ſo good as to call her maid to tie it for me; and while I ſtood waiting, a chariot ſtopt at the door, out of which came a genteel, well dreſt young lady. " Pray," ſaid ſhe, " Mrs.—, to the ſhopkeeper, " is my

" ſuit

" ſuit of linen finiſhed?" Then looking about at me, who ſtood waiting for my patten, " Bleſs me," ſaid ſhe, " I am ſtrangely deceived, if " this is not miſs *Montague.*" I could not help, my dear *Caroline*, being fluttered at my being known by a lady of faſhion. I did not preſently recollect who the lady was; yet I knew her face perfectly. On my telling her ſhe was not miſtaken, " Have you forgot," ſaid ſhe, " your " old ſchool companion, *Fanny Web?*" I immediately knew her, and, I believe, made an aukward enough apology for my bad memory. Though I was very much diſconcerted at her firſt taking notice of me, her frank behaviour, in ſome meaſure, wore it off; and it gave me a ſecret kind of pleaſure to have a lady of her appearance again talking to me, in the free and eaſy manner of a companion. She aſked me

where

" where I lived: if the way ſhe " went, I might go with her in the " chariot, and ſhe would ſet me " down." I told her in —— ſtreet, which being quite the contrary way to hers, ſhe ſaid, " ſhe did not know " how to part with me ſo ſoon, and " would take it as a favour if I " would go home, and dine with " her. It would make her vaſtly " happy to talk over the little ex- " ploits ſhe and I had together at " ſchool; and ſhe would like to " hear what had happened to me in " theſe laſt five years that ſhe had " not ſeen me." I thanked her for her invitation; but ſaid, " I could " not poſſibly go in the dreſs I was " in." " That, miſs *Montague*" returned ſhe, " ſhall be no excuſe, if " you have no other. I poſitively " inſiſt you ſhall go with me, and " dine. I am quite alone; ſo do " not ſay another word againſt it."

I had

I had two reaſons to induce me to comply. One was, to avoid my officious gallant: the other was, frankly to tell miſs *Web* of my diſagreeable ſituation, and to aſk her advice; her affable behaviour giving me reaſon to hope, ſhe would take a pleaſure in having it in her power to ſerve me. To be brief, after ſhe had finiſhed her buſineſs in the ſhop, without turning my eyes where I might ſee my gentleman, I went into the chariot with miſs *Web*, and drove away. We talked, by the way, on indifferent matters; the noiſe of the carriages preventing us from entering into any ſerious converſation. We ſoon arrived at —— ſtreet, which was not a great way from the ſhop we came from. When the chariot ſtopt, "Here, miſs "*Montague*," ſaid ſhe, "is my houſe," and ſtepping out, led the way. I was conducted into a very neat parlour,

lour, rather genteel that elegant. After being welcomed in a kind and polite manner, ſhe began to be particular in her inquiry concerning my preſent ſituation. I told her frankly every thing it was neceſſary to relate. The behaviour of my relations ſhe expreſſed her diſlike of in very warm terms. I excuſed them as much as poſſible, by aſcribing it to the diſtance that was betwixt them and me, which kept them from having that tenderneſs for me, which one generally has for a relation brought up under their own eyes.

Dinner being ſerved up interrupted our converſation. As ſoon as it was over, and every thing removed, the glaſſes ſet, and the ſervants withdrawn; "I ſuppoſe, miſs *Monta-*
"*gue*," ſaid ſhe, "you would wiſh
"to hear my adventures, ſince I left
"ſchool." "I ſhall think myſelf
"obliged to you," returned I; "but

there

" there is one thing, I think, I can " gueſs, which is, that your aunt, " *Web*, is dead, and has left you the " fortune you expected." " Yes," returned ſhe, " my aunt is dead. But " hang all my relations: I have " been as little obliged to mine, miſs " *Montague*, as you have been to " yours. You know my parents " died, when I was very young; ſo " young that I remember nothing " of them but their poverty: which, " I believe, impreſſed in my mind, " in my early years, ſuch an aver- " ſion to that ſtate, that I don't " know what I would not do to " avoid it." " Indeed," ſaid I, " it " has always been my opinion, that " it is the duty of every one to exert " themſelves, as much as lies in their " power, to prevent it; but there " are ſo many rubs and ſtumbling " blocks come in the way, when " one is at the down-hill of fortune,

" that

" that it requires an uncommon de-
" gree of reſolution and courage,
" when one is ſtepping up to avoid
" being puſhed down again. The
" neglect of relations and acquaint-
" ance I take to be the ſevereſt
" conſequence of adverſity to a per-
" ſon of any degree of feeling; at
" the ſame time we ought not to be
" too harſh in our reflections againſt
" them. The frailty of human na-
" ture we have reaſon to regret;
" but the little knowledge every one
" has of themſelves, is enough to
" keep us from being ſevere in our
" cenſure of others. Beſides, it is
" wiſely ordered to convince us on
" whom alone we ought to depend;
" and we very often ſee how ſur-
" priſingly providence raiſes up a
" friend to protect the indigent,
" where there is the leaſt reaſon to
" expect one. But I interrupt you,
" madam. By what you have ſaid, I
" preſume

" preſume you can give me an in-
" ſtance of it that will give me plea-
" ſure."

" Indeed, miſs *Montague*," ſaid ſhe, " I have reaſon to be thankful.
" I never loſt one friend, but I found
" another; and I have no manner
" of doubt, but you will be as for-
" tunate. When my father and
" mother died, I had a great num-
" ber of relations, but no friends.
" Having married againſt the con-
" ſent of their parents, they lived,
" as I ſaid before, and died in pover-
" ty. They left no other child but
" me; my nurſe, who had no chil-
" dren of her own, took me, and
" partly out of affection, and, as
" ſhe often told me, to keep down
" my pride, which it ſeems early ap-
" peared, partly out of charity main-
" tained me: and indeed if ſhe had
" not done ſo, I muſt either have
" ſtarved or gone on the pariſh.

" With

" With this nurſe I lived till I was
" nine years of age. At that time
" my aunt, who, you have often
" heard, had quarrelled with moſt
" of her relations, took it into her
" head to inquire after me. I was
" accordingly ſoon found out, e-
" quipped, and ſent to a boarding-
" ſchool at ——. I was told by every
" body that I was a rich heireſs,
" and, I believe you'll remember,
" behaved accordingly. I conti-
" nued at ſchool till I was fif-
" teen, when my aunt brought me
" to town. My temper was gay
" and volatile; her's ſour and mo-
" roſe. I expected, when I came to
" town, to enter into the gay world,
" and to be careſſed as one of my
" fortune and beauty deſerved. But,
" inſtead of that, ſhe was continu-
" ally reading me grave lectures,
" that ten times the fortune ſhe had
" to beſtow could not have made me

" bear

" bear with tolerable patience. A
" fever and ague ended her life.
" She was no ſooner dead, than
" my numerous relations came buz-
" zing about me. Not doubting but
" I was heireſs to her fortune, they
" behaved to me with the greateſt
" politeneſs and reſpect. Each apo-
" logized for not taking notice of
" me, by telling me of the ſtrange
" humour of my aunt, which pre-
" vented them from inquiring after
" me, while I was under her pro-
" tection. They mentioned nothing
" of what prevented them when I
" was with my nurſe; but ſaid they
" would be very happy to counten-
" ance ſo near a relation, and to be
" as ſerviceable to me as lay in their
" power. One uncle and aunt
" wiſhed I would think of living
" with them; that I needed be at
" no expence in their houſe, except
" for my equipage and cloaths. A-

" nother

" nother uncle and aunt begged I
" would live with them; that my
" couſins were wiſhing of all things
" for the pleaſure of my company.
" In ſhort, before my aunt was in-
" terred, I had invitations from half
" a ſcore relations, whom I only
" knew by hear-ſay, and letters from
" as many more; nay, even from
" couſins twenty times removed,
" expreſſing their good wiſhes for
" me with all the warmth of the
" moſt ſincere friendſhip.

" But how was every one ſtruck
" dumb with ſurprize, when, after
" the funeral, the will was read,
" and the fortune was found left to
" a charity work-houſe, and to me
" the large ſum of two hundred
" pounds! The change of their
" behaviour to me can ſcarce be
" conceived. From their charm-
" ing niece, their dear miſs *Web*,
" whom they would be proud to in-

" troduce to the world, I was dwin-
" dled down to the girl. And what
" could poſſibly be done with me?
" each declining to give their advice
" concerning me, from the fear they
" pretended of its not anſwering their
" wiſhes. One of my uncles ſpoke
" up and ſaid, ſince they were met,
" there was a neceſſity to do ſome-
" thing for me. I was then aſked
" what buſineſs I would chuſe to be
" put to? To which I anſwered, I
" was indifferent what became of me.
" But being preſſed to make a choice,
" I ſaid I ſhould like to go to a
" ſhop, my inclination always being
" to ſee and be ſeen. Accordingly,
" in a few days I was bound ap-
" prentice to a haberdaſher in the
" *Hay-Market*, with ſtrict orders
" given to my miſtreſs not to allow
" me to be troubleſome to my re-
" lations, but to keep me conſtantly
" at work. My mournings, which

" were

" were left me by my aunt, were " very genteel. She had likewiſe " left me all her cloaths, which, " with my own, my aunt *Filmore* " ſaid, were ſufficient to ſerve me " for ſeven years to come. Theſe " were given in charge to my miſ- " treſs, to be given me as ſhe thought " proper.

" Tho' my aunts had ordered my " miſtreſs to take care, that I ſhould " not be troubleſome with my viſits, " ſhe thought, as my relations were " very numerous, and it was the " cuſtom of all her young folks to " viſit their friends on the *Sundays*, " I might give each of them a *Sun-* " *day* by turns, without being trou- " bleſome, as it would take up at " leaſt half a year to go thro' them. " Accordingly the firſt *Sunday*, ſhe " deſired me to go to Sir *James Fil-* " *more*'s, and gave me a direction " to his houſe; for I had never

" been there, occaſioned, as was
" ſuppoſed, by my aunt *Web*'s being
" at variance with his family, as
" well as her other relations. I dreſt
" myſelf as genteelly as any one
" could do in mourning; and as you
" know I had got good education,
" and had been uſed to the beſt com-
" pany in ——, I had no reaſon
" to think my relations would be
" aſhamed of me.

" When I came to Sir *James*
" *Filmore*'s, the footman who opened
" the door, having ſeen me at my
" aunt *Web*'s, deſired me to walk
" into a parlour, where were ſitting
" three or four of my female cou-
" ſins. Having never ſeen me be-
" fore, they very politely deſired me
" to take the ſeat next the fire; and
" one of them ſaid, her mamma
" would be down ſtairs preſently.
" My aunt, returned I, need be in
" no hury; my name, ladies, is *Web.*

" They

" They looked at one another, ſeem-
ingly at a loſs how to behave. " Our
" couſin *Web!* ſaid one of them;
" *Polly* why don't you welcome her
" here. *Polly* then made up to
" me with a reſerved air, and ſalut-
" ing me, ſaid ſhe was glad to ſee
" me. The reſt followed her exam-
" ple; then dropt out of the room one
" by one, leaving me alone. After
" ſitting about a quarter of an hour,
" lady *Filmore* made her appear-
" ance, with an air as ſtately and
" ſolemn as a tragedy queen. With-
" out deſiring me to ſit down, miſs
" *Web*, ſaid ſhe, did your miſtreſs
" deſire you to come here to-day?
" Yes, ma'am, returned I. That is
" very ſtrange; I thought I deſired
" her not to allow you to come,
" but when I ſent for you. We
" are to have a great deal of com-
" pany to-day; ſo I cannot deſire
" you to ſtay: but I will ſend for

" you ſome day, when we are to be
" alone; and tell your miſtreſs, I
" was very much ſurpriſed ſhe has
" not remembered my orders better.
" Provoked at her behaviour, I told
" her ladyſhip, ſhe might ſave her-
" ſelf the trouble; ſince ſhe did
" not think me fit to appear before
" her company, I ſcorned to viſit
" her in private. She called me
" ſaucy little minx, and ordered me
" never to ſee her more. I made
" her one of my loweſt curtſies,
" and laughing heartily ſaid, I ſhould
" be her charming niece, her dear
" ſweet miſs *Web*; that my couſins
" ſhould want the pleaſure of my
" company of all things, before I
" honoured them with another viſit.

" When I came to the ſtreet, I
" began to think whether or not I
" might venture to viſit any of my
" other relations; but remembring
" I had not got a direction for any

of

" of them, I found it would be
" impoſſible for that day. Know-
" ing I ſhould not find my miſtreſs
" or any of the family at home, I
" thought I would go and take a
" walk in the *Mall*. I had never
" been there but with my aunt *Web*;
" and at an hour too when it is
" not much frequented. I was per-
" fectly amazed and delighted at the
" crouds of company I ſaw. I had
" not walked above half an hour,
" when a handſome young fellow
" in black made up to me, and
" ſaid, he was ſurpriſed to ſee ſo
" fine a young lady walking alone,
" and begged I would allow him
" the honour to attend me. I thank-
" ed him, and very frankly accept-
" ed his offer. We walked a conſi-
" derable time, he praiſing my beau-
" ty and ſhape, which, he ſaid, had
" attracted his obſervation the mo-
" ment he ſaw me. Several queſ-

" tions he aſked me: when I had
" been at the play houſe? the opera?
" I certainly had not been there
" lately, or ſo much beauty could
" not have eſcaped his notice. I
" told him I had never been at any
" of the places he mentioned; for
" that I had been confined by an
" old aunt, who would never allow
" me to go. But now, I thanked
" God, ſhe was gone to reſt, if
" an ill-natured hag like her could
" get reſt, who had tricked me out
" of forty thouſand pounds. He
" then aſked my name, and where I
" lived at preſent. When I told
" him, What, ſaid he, in ſurprize,
" *Fanny Web!* Is the charming lit-
" tle angel I have been talking to
" ſo long my couſin miſs *Web?*
" What! returned I, are you one of
" my couſins? Yes, madam, ſaid
" he, I have that honour. I am
" the eldeſt ſon of your uncle-in-
" law

" law, Sir *James Filmore.* I don't " like you the better for that, ſaid " I; and then told him how I had " been uſed that morning by his " mother and ſiſters, and in what " manner I had returned it. He " commended my ſpirit, and ſaid, " I had behaved as I ought to have " done.

" After walking a conſiderable " time, he conducted me home; and " as he could not, he ſaid, deſire " me again to viſit at his father's, " begged I would condeſcend to " meet him ſometimes after ſhop- " hours, and take a walk. I made " no objection to that, and accord- " ingly made an appointment to " meet him next evening. In ſhort, " after two or three private walks, and " two or three jaunts to the country, " he was ſo much in love with me, that " he found it impoſſible to live with- " out me. I was no leſs pleaſed with

" him;

" him; ſo was eaſily prevailed on to " leave Mrs. ——, and go with him " to a furniſhed houſe he took for me " at *Kenſington.*"

" Good heavens!" ſaid I, in ſurprize, " did you go and live with " him without being married? Mar- " ried — (ſaid ſhe) thank the Lord he " made no ſuch propoſal, or I ſhould " have been fooliſh enough at that " time to have complied."

Oh! my dear *Caroline*, how do you think I looked, when I found I was in the company of a creature paſt having a ſenſe of ſhame! I cannot deſcribe to you, how I was affected: my heart trembled, and the tear ſtarted in my eye. " O miſs " *Web*," ſaid I, " how have I been " miſtaken!" " Miſtaken in what, " pray? You have got, I ſuppoſe, " ſome romantic notions of virtue," ſaid ſhe with a ſneer: then repeated a ſpeech out of Sir *Harry Wildair*

in the Trip to the Jubilee, with a theatrical air: "Can your virtue "beſpeak you a front-row in the "boxes? no: for the players can't "live upon virtue. Can your vir-"tue keep you a coach and ſix? "no, no: your virtuous women "walk a-foot? Can your virtue hire "you a pew in the church? Why, "the very ſexton will tell you, no. "Can your virtue ſtake for you "at piquet? No—Then what bu-"ſineſs has a woman with virtue."

"I have no reaſon, miſs *Web*," ſaid I "to ſuppoſe, that any argu-"ments I could uſe with you in the "cauſe of virtue, would have any "effect; your education was ſuch, "that you cannot have ignorance "to plead for an excuſe. I pray "ſincerely you may be convinced, "before it is too late, that virtue in "penury and want is more deſirable "than infamy in a ſtate-coach."

Pulling

Pulling back my chair from the table, I was going to riſe, when ſhe ſtunned me at once, by throwing a glaſs of wine full in my face, uttering the moſt terrible oaths that could be imagined to come from a creature the moſt abandoned. Frightened almoſt out of my ſenſes, I had not power to move, when the door opened, and, as I ſuppoſed, her couſin came into the room. Obſerving me, "—You have got company, I ſee, "*Fanny*." To which ſhe anſwered, with a loud laugh, "that ſhe had picked up a girl, when ſhe "was out a ſhopping, that had "been preaching to her in praiſe of "virtue. Come, come," ſaid ſhe, "madam, take up your trumpery, "and troop." My lace and fans lying on the ſlab, I was endeavouring to riſe, and had got my face wiped with my handkerchief, when the ſuppoſed couſin coming forward, took

took my hand, and obliged me to look up. But, good heavens! how was I ſurpriſed when I beheld Sir *Harry Pembroke!* He ſtarted back. "Can I believe my eyes! Oh, miſs "*Montague*," ſaid he, "how am I "aſhamed!" "Your ſervant, Sir," ſaid the vile miſs *Web*; "I find "you have met with an old ac- "quaintance." "Yes," ſaid Sir *Harry*, "an acquaintance whom I ho- "nour and admire;" and kneeling down before me, aſked, "if I could "forgive him?" The enraged miſtreſs, ſeeing him at my feet, in a fury of paſſion, flew at him, pulled off his wig, and threw it in the fire: then raved and ſtamped like a bedlamite. "This, madam," ſaid Sir *Harry*, "I will not bear;" and, lifting her up in his arms, was endeavouring to carry her out of the room, when the door opened a ſecond time, and lady *Pembroke* made her

her appearance. Figure to yourſelf, my dear *Caroline*, this extraordinary ſcene. I have not ſpirits to deſcribe it. Sir *Harry*, I ſuppoſe, ſtruck with ſurprize, ſet down his miſtreſs, who no ſooner was at liberty, than ſhe took advantage of his confuſion, and beat him moſt unmercifully. "O, "my deareſt *Sophy*," ſaid I, running to lady *Pembroke*, "God al- "mighty give you patience and "comfort!" She puſhed me from her with diſdain, and endeavoured to pull miſs *Web* from Sir *Harry*. In the midſt of the confuſion, not well knowing what I did, I run down ſtairs; and the door being open, got out to the ſtreet, where ſeeing a hackney coach, I hurried in, ſcare able to give the coachman directions where to ſet me down.

The End of VOL. I.

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